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HOW TO START AGAIN

HERE is reason to think that the Russians them- elves are now alarmed at the results of Polish nd Czech "expulsion" policy. Ultimately, of ourse, the U.S.S.R. bears the chief responsi- ility, since it agreed on the general policy with e Polish and Czech Governments. But refugees nd administrators on the spot agree that the ussians are now perturbed by the administrative roblem involved in having this vast starving and esperate population in their zone, are attempting relieve themselves of some of the results by ersuading their Allies to share in the work of lief, and have been trying to restrain the more iolent Poles, who are actually angry because the ussians have insisted on allowing German orkers to remain in Breslau. Mr. Bevin told arliament on Wednesday that the Polish Ambas- dor in London had "recently" informed him at expulsions had "stopped." Does this assur- nce dispose of press reports (equally, if not more, recent") that 4,500,000 more Germans are to expelled from Poland? If it does not, then Ir. Bevin's course is clear—to go back to the otsdam proposal that the policy of expulsion ould be modified, and to reopen negotiations ith all the occupying Powers for a joint solution Europe's administrative problem.

The British position is peculiarly difficult. We ve destroyed German industry and our adminis- ators are now trying to start factories going ain. One of the most important tasks is to velop a joint international scheme for the Ruhr d the Rhineland. Every operational effort ould be made to tackle the problem of the Ruhr ines with the utmost speed, and one necessity to allocate for German use enough coal to courage the German miner to work. The rmal figure of 1,550 calories per head (just above arvation) at which the British aim, but do not ways achieve, for Germans in their zone, cannot maintained if two million more Germans rive, unless large further amounts of food are ported. It is doubtful how far this can be ne, since the wheat which the British are eady importing has to be paid for out of our minishing reserves of dollars. The U.S.A. has w voted an additional £140 million sterling for U.N.R.R.A., which, as regards Germany, deals only with displaced persons. This will slightly, but only slightly, remove the pressure, and it is to be hoped that the Americans will agree with the French and British on a more comprehensive form of relief. How urgent the problem is, the public is only just beginning to understand. Famine and disease are not national problems: they are matters for the whole world. It is impossible for either the moral or the physical standards of civilisation to be maintained if millions of human beings in Europe are dying of starvation.

Mr. Bevin's unexceptionable statement in the House of Commons on the breakdown of the Big Five Conference ended on a hopeful note. The Americans and Russians both assert in cordial terms that agreement is possible and necessary. Another conference must begin before long. In the meantime we urge that before the Powers are again involved in these controversial and difficult problems of procedure, prestige, exclusive zones, frontiers and forms of government, immediate agreement must be reached on the administrative problem of Europe. The unity of the United Nations is more likely to be achieved through working together on technical and urgent problems that affect the Russians as well as the West. Humanity and expediency in this case speak with the same voice.

Palestine

Palestine is perhaps the most explosive topic before the Government. The stories of Jews arriving illegally in Palestine, where both Jews and Arabs are armed, and an immense British force is stationed to keep order—with American Jewry, backed by President Truman, angrily demanding the abrogation of the White Paper—here is a situation full of danger. We understand that the Government is considering a proposal which is acceptable to the Arab League. It is apparently proposed to restrict the immigration to 1,500 persons per month for the next twelve months, during which a final scheme is to be completed. This will rouse bitter feelings among many Labour supporters. Probably the Government's main objective is to persuade the Americans to share the responsibility for a country in which they express a warm interest but make no material offers of help.

The Dock Strike

No criticism can be levelled against the Government for using troops to unload food-ships in docks affected by the strike. But this is only one part—and a one-sided part—of the answer to a problem which the Government (excusably, because of its difficulties) has been inclined to burke. It was only to be expected that the Unions, as a result of their policy of war-time collaboration, would become suspect in the eyes of the rank and file as "agents of capitalism" and that workers would repudiate, in consequence, the normal machinery of negotiation. This, as an article on a later page emphasises, is a salient feature on the Merseyside; and it applies not only to the docks. But with still greater certainty should it have been foreseen that, in the absence of a positive Government policy with regard to wages (linked, of course, to price policy) the abrupt termination of high war earnings, through long overtime, special bonuses and so forth, was bound to lead to unco-ordinated demands all over the industrial field for an increase in basic rates. Acceptance of the dockers' full demands (notably a 25*s.* daily minimum) would place them in a more favourable position than railwaymen or workers in essential export industries like textiles. That is irrelevant. The real point is that the settlement of wages by trial of strength is not compatible with a Full Employment policy—to say nothing of the special case of nationalised industries. This must be recognised by Labour. On the other hand, the Government must work out and fully explain a national wage policy.

The Cost of Houses

Mr. Bevan has now publicly confirmed that the local authorities are to be his "chief executive instrument in the actual construction of houses," and he has promised them additional powers of land acquisition. Apart, however, from the problems of local authorities' technical staffs and of the mal-distribution of aggregate building man-power, the Minister of Health is confronted with a new "snag"—the very high tender prices that are being received by local authorities all over the country and for every type of house. These high tenders are, of course, the result not only of current high prices of materials, and low output per man-hour, but also of uncertainty about the future level of costs in both these fields. We see Mr. Willink arguing that, unless output increased, the 4*d.* an hour advance which the building Trade Unions are now asking for would mean £40–£50 on the price of a house, and 8½*d.* on the rent. This is, of course, a truism; but the factors that really matter are the prices of materials and the cost of labour measured not in hours but in output. We hope Mr. Bevan's plans include not only the mass-production of standard components in publicly operated and controlled factories, but also the establishment of some sort of National Building Corporation which can maintain a permanent skilled labour force and tender for big jobs in any part of the country, especially in areas where private tenders are high.

Elections and Power Politics

Gradually the popular will in liberated countries is finding expression in the election of governments. The results of the polling for the Norwegian *Storting* are not yet complete, but it looks as though the Labour Party, with 75 members, will hold half the seats, and will have a working majority if they collaborate with the seven Communists elected. In the Czechoslovak regional elections for the electoral college which will select members of the new Parliament, the Communists and President Benes's National Socialists have between them secured a sweeping majority—the Communists leading by two seats. Here again the future will turn on the extent to which a united Communist-Socialist "front" can be established; the swing to the Left is unmistakable. By way of contrast, in the Budapest municipal elections (reported by the *News Chronicle's* correspondent to have been held in conditions of genuine freedom) the Left *bloc* (Communists and Social Democrats) have polled only 42 per cent. of the votes. The Agrarian Party (corresponding roughly to that led by M. Mikolajczyk in Poland) has secured an absolute majority. This evidence of real electoral freedom may encourage the British Foreign Office to follow the lead of the Americans in according recognition to the Hungarian Government; but we suspect that the decision whether or not to recognise an Eastern European Government is dictated in the case of the U.S. State Department less by considerations of "democracy" than by power-politics. Was it coincidence that Mr. Byrnes changed his mind about democracy in Hungary immediately after the Russians had demanded a Four-Power Control Commission in Tokyo?

New Government for Greece

The decision of the Left and Centre parties to boycott the elections announced for January 20th was the final blow to the Voulgaris Cabinet. Its resignation opens the way for a more representative administration. Its record shows that the attempt to run Greece by a "non-political" Government—which quickly degenerated into a group of Right-Wing soldiers and officials—was a mistake. Not only did the Voulgaris Cabinet fail to command much popular support, but it was so weak in the face of Royalist pressure that first M. Sofianopoulos, the Foreign Minister, and then M. Varvaressos, who was in charge of economic affairs, had to resign because their efforts were wrecked by the Right. It should now be possible to form a Centre Government with the support, if not the participation, of E.A.M. Its main task should be to ensure that the electoral registers are once more revised and that the elections—which should not be held before the spring—are as fair as possible. It is essential that a "political" administration be formed; otherwise the Government cannot command the support of any important section of public opinion.

Imperialisms and Persia

Now that it has been agreed between London and Moscow that the withdrawal of British and Russian forces from Persia shall be completed by the end of February, 1946, does it follow that Persia will then be free from the threat of division into spheres of influence? Much depends on the line which the Tudeh ("People's Mass") Party pursues when the Russians have left the northern provinces in which the Party has its strength. It can point to the existence in Teheran of a Government which is as corrupt as it is inefficient, has promoted nothing but the interests of the wealthy landlords, and is suspect, in the eyes of nationalist-minded young Persians, of complete subservience to Anglo-American oil interests. Supported, as it has been, by the Russian army of occupation, the Tudeh Party is credited with the aim of securing the incorporation of Azerbaijan, Gilan and Mazanderan as an autonomous republic within the U.S.S.R. By all accounts the Party has established a *de facto* monopoly of the administration in those provinces; the writ of the Teheran Government no longer runs there, and if an attempt is made, next spring, to re-establish Central authority, the Tudehites will doubtless be inclined to invoke Russian protection. The best contribution that Britain can make is to state categorically that we have no intention of supporting a reactionary regime at Teheran against any genuinely progressive Persian movement.

Is Peron Finished?

Colonel Peron, virtual dictator of Argentina, has at last been overthrown by the initiative of high Army officers and by rising popular opposition, which reached its climax last week in large street demonstrations and the resistance of the university students. But Peron's resignation may not eliminate him as a Presidential candidate; he has not been arrested, and he is already threatening civil war. A decree instituting free elections is to be signed this week, but we do not yet know what is to be the character of the interim administration which will supervise them. President Farrell remains. Will there be an amnesty and freedom for the political parties to organise? Until we have the answers to these questions it would be premature to rejoice overmuch in Peron's downfall. The Army and Navy officers who have brought it about were, for the most part, supporters of the original putsch and are politically reactionary—though they viewed Peron's Fascist ambitions with increasing suspicion. The chief problem now is how far the democratic parties can unite to purge the country and prevent Peron making any come-back.

The World's Food

The United Nations conference to be held in Quebec next week is to work out the details of the Food and Agriculture Organisation called for at San Francisco. Here is something which has nothing to do with the punctilios of Potsdam, or strategic bases, or ethnographic frontiers. It deals with the basic need of mankind—food—and the basic industry—agriculture—and with the "marriage" of these two. Its policy represents idealism heavily underscored by stark reality—the present world shortages and the threat of starvation which confront millions to-day. What the Organisation does is the intimate concern alike of the mothers of South Wales and of the mothers of the Donetz Basin; of the under-privileged of the Deep South and the under-nourished of the Ruhr; of the hungry in Western Europe and the famine-threatened in Bengal. Conversely, it can mean prosperity for farmers and peasants everywhere because to lift the world out of the trough of famine to the crest of well-being means a world-expansion of agriculture The new Organisation must have executive power and financial resources. It should start with Wheat Pool (with powers to buy up surpluses and distribute according to need), and with a Rice Pool for the Far East. It should be able to promote production and act as a clearing house. The British Government has been wise to include in its delegation Sir John Orr. More than any other man he understands how a community of interes based on common needs can be made a unifying force transcending Power Politics.

Constitution for Ceylon

The Report of the Soulbury Commission on Constitutional Reform in Ceylon is based on the assumption that the politically conscious Sinhalese desire a Constitution on British lines. As the next step, therefore, along the road to the eventual goal of Dominion status, the Commission proposes that Ceylon should have a Lower Chamber of 101 members (six nominated by the Governor-General and 95 elected by universal suffrage), and a Senate of 30 members—15 elected by the Lower Chamber and 15 nominated. The Cabinet would be responsible to the Legislature, but Defence, external affairs, currency, and "laws affecting a racial or religious minority" would be "reserved subjects." Constituency arrangements are proposed which are designed to protect the non-Sinhalese minorities (of which Indian Tamils are much the largest). Whether these are sufficient to solve the Communal problem to the complete satisfaction of the minorities is uncertain; and there is likely to be Sinhalese oppositio to the high proportion of "nominated" seat in the Senate and to the inclusion of commercia policy in relation both to foreign and Commonwealth markets in the list of subjects "reserved" for the Governor-General.

West Indian Priorities

Six years of war have intervened between th completion of the Report of the Moyne Commission on the West Indies and its publication i full last week; but there has been little fundamental change in the deplorable economic an social conditions which the Commission recorded Indeed, the 1943–44 Report now issued by th Comptroller of Development and Welfare—a office created in 1940 as a sequel to the Commission—invites the conclusion that the "enlightened" colonial policy which the Commissio advocated for the West Indies, starting wit education, agricultural research and much ampl social services, and culminating in the proje of an ultimately self-governing "Caribbea Federation," is likely to be shipwrecked on th sheer inability of the islands to support a growi population or pay for social services, unless the economic structure is radically changed. Tinkering with land settlement and the sugar industr is no answer; nor can the solution be found i unlimited grants-in-aid from the British taxpaye A more balanced economy for the islands, including a considerable measure of industrialisation, is imperative. Private enterprise, which g what it could out of the West Indies and then to no further interest, cannot do the job.

The Future of the I.L.O.

The International Labour Conference which due to meet in Paris this coming week will ha under discussion the whole future of the I.L. in relation to the new United Nations Organisation. Under the old system, the I.L.O. acted complete independence of the League, except matters of finance, in which it depended getting its budget voted by the League Assembl It is by no means clear how it is intended to into the new structure. One way would be it to be taken over completely by the Econom and Social Council of U.N.O.—in which case would lose its tripartite character, its independe staff and director. Another, sounder, suggesti is that the I.L.O. should be converted into "specialised agency" (the phrase used in

Charter) parallel to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the proposed Health Organisation, and so on. This would enable the I.L.O. to preserve its structure, and would leave its relations to the Economic and Social Council to be worked out by discussion. Much will depend on the attitude of the Russians, which may be modified now that the new World Trade Union Federation has replaced their old enemy, the I.F.T.U. The Russians, however, may still object to the tripartite structure.

Strikes in America

The strikes in the United States are spreading fast, as attempts are made to bring down wartime earnings or to allow them to fall without readjusting wage-rates so as to maintain them under the changed conditions. Probably, in a good many cases, employers welcome the strikes. American methods of production are bound to involve the entire shutting down of many factories for considerable periods while they are being converted to peace-time uses; and if the labour needed for the work of conversion can be retained, strikes by the main body of productive workers merely save employers the trouble of standing them off. Of course this does not apply to all the strikes, and in some cases the actual conversion operations are being delayed. But it goes far to explain the apparent equanimity with which American business men seem to regard the spreading movement. Naturally they clamour none the less for anti-labour legislation; but when do they not? There are large sections of employers spoiling for a fight as soon as they can get it, because they see their best chance of restoring the old conditions and breaking the power of the C.I.O. during the change-over from war to peace.

PARLIAMENT: Here we are again

THE recess has done nothing to clarify political alignments. The Tory Party is still fumbling for a basis of opposition, and the Labour back-benchers continue to feel that the Government should be more "Socialist," but cannot yet agree on a definition of that word. It will be the job of Hector McLean and Maurice Webb, the newly elected chairman and vice-chairman, to canalise the vague discontents into a stream of constructive criticism. Their first task in this respect will be the question of Palestine, on which a vocal minority is insistent that the Government are in honour bound to fulfil its election pledges to the last letter, while the passive majority are beginning to realise for the first time the full implications of a policy which they had accepted, as a side issue, on which Hugh Dalton and the experts could safely be allowed to have the final say. At present it looks as though the Government will be able to manoeuvre its way through a ticklish situation. By his restrained statement on the failure of the Foreign Ministers' conference, Mr. Bevin was able to strengthen his hold on his own supporters. Even his severest critics could find nothing to blame, and refrained from pressing for a debate. The Prime Minister, too, delighted his supporters by an unexpected gaiety at question time.

I hope that the roar of applause, in which he sat down, will encourage him to repeat and increase the dose. Otherwise question time is still a very staid affair. Most Ministers keep far too close to the brief prepared for them by their Civil Servants. John Strachey stands out a mile. He is competent, human, and, rarest of qualities, completely audible.

The first two debates on Government Legislation were tame. The debate on Tuesday on the extension of controls petered out owing to the obvious lack of conviction on the part of the Opposition, while Jim Griffiths's Workmen's Compensation Bill is universally admitted to be a sound measure, whose only failing is its limited character. But the atmosphere may be very different when we come to debate the Nationalisation of the Bank of England. Hugh Dalton has put one unexpected tooth into his Bill—the powers for the central bank to issue directions to commercial banks. This the Tories will do everything in their power to extract. We can expect at last our first real debate.

PHINEAS

"ATOMIC DEMOCRACY"

MR. TRUMAN's announcement that the United States intends to retain the secret of the atomic bomb was not unexpected. It is none the less the most fateful word that has been spoken to our planet for many a year. The secret, which every student of nuclear physics can penetrate, so far as theory goes, covers only the details of the risky and intricate processes of manufacture. It can be preserved at most only for a very few years. The decision to withhold it can only mean that Mr. Truman intends to use it in the game of power politics to reinforce the means of pressure which his country's resources already gave her. Because the interval of monopoly will be brief, the temptation is all the greater to extract from it its latent advantages during the period of the settlement. Its effect is mainly psychological. No one seriously supposes that the owners of the few existing bombs will be in a hurry to use them. They weigh none the less on the imagination both of those who possess them and those who lack them, begetting in the former a consciousness of omnipotence and in the latter an even more perilous sense of inferiority. That sense, as happens so often in daily life, may have the effect of making its victim not merely suspicious, but tough and intractable. Russia's behaviour at the Council of Foreign Ministers was clearly a reflection of her fear of what her press now calls "atomic democracy." When in this atmosphere of strain and resentment, Russia herself succeeds in manufacturing this terrible weapon, the competition may bring us in sight of a war of extermination. The American Century is not opening happily.

Three possible courses were open to the Power which first achieved this invention. The right course is the one which international duty prescribes. An offer should be made to disclose it to the Security Council of the United Nations. The ownership of omnipotence would pass to a World Organisation, which would have to approach, much more closely than San Francisco did, the conception of a Super-State, capable as it would now be of overawing a Great Power. In time the benefits which industrial use of atomic energy will confer would become the cement that held the international organisation together. Without an effective system of sanctions we shall not get disarmament, but it is by dispensing benefits, economic and cultural, rather than by coercion, that the wholehearted allegiance of mankind can best be won. When men all over the globe look to the United Nations for the energy that warms their homes, drives their ships and bakes their daily bread, the miracle of a beneficent World-Government will be achieved. The first step is to centralise and finance all further research under the direction and inspection of a scientific staff that owes allegiance to the United Nations and to it alone. This constructive use of the secret Mr. Truman seems decisively to have rejected.

Once the decision was taken to use a temporary advantage for national ends, two courses were open to Mr. Truman. He might have staked out his claims to an American empire or sphere of influence, while respecting the claims of other Great Powers to do as they saw fit within their own zones. That would be a bad solution, but if the respective spheres of influence could be delimited without too much friction, it might be worked without much risk to the world's peace. The third course is the worst of all, and it is the course that American policy appears to have chosen. It consists in reserving an exclusive American sphere in the New World and in the Far East, while at the same time intervening in the East European zone which the Russians insist on regarding as their own.

In the Pacific zone General MacArthur is the unchallenged dictator, who makes and unmakes puppet governments at will. America insists on the right not merely of France but of China to discuss the affairs of the Balkans. But in deciding the shape of Japan's future government and social structure, no other Power, not even Japan's neighbours, the Russians, Australians and Chinese, have yet had any say, while the State Department, while agreeable to a Five-Power Advisory Council, has flatly laid down the rule, that if opinions should differ, it is the American view that must "govern." Can anyone honestly be surprised at Moscow's reaction to this aspect of atomic democracy? If spheres of influence are to be the pattern of our future world—an ugly pattern which we do not yet accept—they must be loyally respected by each of the Great Powers.

Much that the Americans are doing in Japan is salutary. The whole of the ugly machinery, something between the mediæval Holy Office and the modern Gestapo, by which "dangerous thoughts" were held in check, has now been swept away. The censorship is abolished; the repressive laws are cancelled; the political police is disbanded and its prisoners are free. Even more remarkable is the "disestablishment" of the Shinto religion. It may still be practised, we are told, as a personal cult; but its shrines and its priesthood will receive neither subsidy nor recognition from the Japanese State. Not much, if anything, can now be left alive of the national religion. It had no meaning as a personal cult; it was not, like its rival Buddhism, a salvationist faith, concerned with the destiny of the individual soul in the Cosmos. Its concern was with the relationship between the Japanese race or the Japanese State, incarnated in the divine Emperor, and the sky-gods from whom he claims descent. It can now survive, if at all, only as the rallying focus of patriotic secret societies, or as a consolation to the superstitions of the remoter villages.

The world has been assured not merely that Hirohito acquiesces in the disestablishment of Shintoism, but that he is in his personal convictions a Christian. The achievements of the atomic bomb were evidently more far-reaching than most of us had supposed. It is conceivable that Christianity may now become the fashion in Japan and that this highly adaptable nation may try to follow the American way of life. We should be more sanguine about the consequences of this conversion if there were evidence that the Americans include in their radical programme of reform all the necessary changes in the social structure of this half-feudal, half-capitalistic society. They do apparently intend to break up the great landed estates of the noble clans. That is a promising start, though much depends on the details of the scheme and the decision with which it is carried out. Will the immense estates of the Royal House and the lands attached to the temples be included in it? If so, a peasant democracy might come into being in rural Japan. But we are even more curious to learn what is to happen to Japanese Big Business and more especially to the Octopus Trusts of the Mitsui and Mitsubishi families. Will they find a refuge under the wing of similar American concerns, or will an attempt, probably illusory, be made at "trust-busting"? The only hopeful solution, to socialise them in whole or part, is uncongenial to the conquerors who have assumed the sole charge of Japan's future.

What is Britain's reaction to be to unilateral American policy? If the Labour Government were inclined to hope that American domination in the Pacific and exclusive control of the atomic bomb will increase the chances of world peace, they must have been rudely shaken by General Marshall, who argues that the corollary to possession of the bomb is that the United States must maintain a huge army and navy equipped with every other modern weapon in order to seize and hold the bases of any other Power armed with atomic weapons. Britain's only answer to this horrific threat must be to demand a genuine World Security organisation.

GERMANY REVISITED

I.—BERLIN

“A bloody beleaguered garrison—that’s what we are.” On first impressions nothing could sound more absurd than this remark by my driver. We had flown straight from London to land at the R.A.F. station among the pine trees of Gatow. We hadn’t seen a Russian on the way to the villa where we lunched looking down over the weeping willows at the General’s elegant yacht moored at his private landing stage on the Havel. (The yacht had been requisitioned, on the urgent request of its owner, to avoid its removal by the Russians as war booty.) We had motored into Berlin in mellow autumn sunshine through battered British-controlled Charlottenburg and down that colossal East-West axis which sweeps through the Tiergarten—its trees so battered that they are only good for firewood—to end at the *Brandenburger Tor*. No fuss here about frontiers, not even a Russian guard—only a notice board in Russian and we were driving down *Unter den Linden* into the Russian sector.

* * *

I began to see what my driver meant when I stopped in the Bendler Strasse to try to find my old flat opposite Tattersalls. Here, just inside the British sector, the Germans had made their last stand and destruction had excelled itself. Bath-tubs, gas-masks, motor-bicycles, chandeliers and thousands of maps, spilled out from a War Ministry office, still littered the pavement. An old *portier* and his wife—the only inhabitants of the street—asked me into their two surviving ground-floor rooms. They could not stop talking. They had no light and little food but things were fine now. They were in the British sector and the tanks patrolled every night.

Next day I talked to a Socialist Leader in what was once one of the big banks—now the offices of the S.P.D. in the Russian sector. He explained how the Russians let each party publish its own paper and had set up a central German administration in their zone. The S.P.D. was working closely with the Communists and the new Conservative Party, the Christian Democratic Union. Pressed for details, he admitted that the Communists naturally were much closer to the Russians. Ulbricht, the German Communist leader (whom we remember here chiefly for his famous article in 1940, in which he denounced any support for either side as criminal, since Great Britain was the most reactionary Power in the world), was now reckoned to be Zhukov’s closest political adviser and the real force behind the Land Reform. Did the Socialists agree with the Land Reform? In principle, yes. Confiscation without compensation of all estates of over 250 acres would certainly smash the Junkers—and a lot of other people besides. But was it wise to split up these confiscated estates into 15-acre lots? And was it sensible to undertake this revolution now when the food situation in the Russian zone was already desperate? Well, the Socialists had their doubts like the Christian Democrats. But what could they do? They had tried to print some mild criticism in their paper; but on that day the Russian censor had deleted six columns. Should the British permit a Socialist Party paper in the British sector? Of course, that would be fine; but editing it would be risky even if you lived in the British sector. Had I heard of abductions? He was sure I would understand.

* * *

Underneath the pallid surface of stunned submission, Berlin eddies with currents and cross-currents of suspicion and fear. Berliners, as a courageous German trade-unionist was not afraid to tell Zhukov, welcomed the British and American troops as liberators. The memories of the siege and the early days of Russian occupation are still constantly revived by the sight of the Eastern refugees, huddled around the railway stations, and by dark rumours of nightly marauding parties. Most of these rumours are exaggerated, but nothing can obliterate the fact that the Russians stripped the bones of this city of the little flesh which clung to them after the fighting. Not only are the great factories like Siemens empty, but almost every house had been pillaged before we arrived. Fear of the Russians makes many workers *like* the British and support the Communists. The two attitudes are perfectly consistent in Berlin to-day.

For, despite the Control Commission, Berlin remains first and foremost the capital of the Russian zone. Superimposed on this purely Russian structure is the division of the city into four sectors administered by the four occupying armies; and superimposed again on the *Kommandatur*, which co-ordinates the policy of the four sectors, is the quite separate organisation of the Control Commission which deals, not with Berlin, but with inter-Allied policy for the four Zones of Germany. Of these three layers of Berlin politics the Russian was first in time and remains first in importance. We are lodgers in Berlin and the Russians are the landlords. No Berliner, whatever his politics, can afford to forget this for one moment. Our supplies and personnel for Berlin are carried from the Zone frontier along one single track railway, one *autobahn* and one very narrow air route from which no deviation whatsoever is permitted. We supply the rolling stock to carry our quota of Berlin’s rations. If the trains sometimes are not returned, or arrive somewhat pillaged after days of delay in Russian sidings, it is difficult to obtain satisfaction. Any undue irritation at our predicament is checked by reflecting how *we* would have liked it if Hamburg had been selected as the seat of the Control Commission and quartered out between the four Powers. Any contempt for the Berlin Socialists’ equivocal attitude is moderated by the thought that a Hamburg Communist might have behaved in a very similar way if he had been pressed by a visiting Russian politician to publish an exposure of the conference organised at Paderborn last week between the Archbishop of Westminster and the German Catholic hierarchy.

I forced myself to make this comparison with Hamburg every day in order to maintain a sense of proportion about Berlin. There is no doubt that by putting them down in the heart of Russian territory, we have increased the difficulties of the Control Commission. How much easier it would have been if the demarcation lines had been drawn so that Berlin—if Berlin *had* to be selected—was genuinely neutral ground on the frontier between two or three Zones. As it is, the Western Powers are given a free squint and a free shop window in Russian territory. We can scrutinise Russian administration on the spot: we can display British methods to the inhabitants of the capital of the Russian Zone. For that advantage we must pay the price—our negotiators are playing an “away match” on Russian ground.

* * *

“The Berliners are experimental rabbits. They probably suffer for it. But that is a small sacrifice, if we can pull it off.” I was talking to a British member of the Education Section of the Kommandatur. We had just visited the elementary schools in Spandau and watched a tiny team of devoted masters and mistresses teaching miraculously chirpy boys and girls the principles of arithmetic. The spirit was there all right, but a fifth of the children had had nothing to eat since the day before, and of the others a majority had a couple of pieces of dry bread for breakfast, and nothing with them in their satchels for lunch.

That is one side of the picture. The other is more cheerful. In the British sections, both of the Kommandatur and of the Control Commission, there is an atmosphere which reminded me of Algiers in the spring of 1943, when we were discovering that Anglo-American team work could succeed so long as we were left alone by our home governments. If good will and energy were all that is needed to make inter-Allied co-operation work these soldiers and civilians would pull the experiment off. How refreshingly different it was talking to them from the commonplaces of diplomatic fencing in London. Here, British, Russians, Americans and French are in daily conference about the practical problems of running a city—and finally a country. They differ—very often profoundly—but they are trying to work out their differences in agreed solutions and are getting to know each other at the same time. The organisation of the Berlin Trade Unions and the syllabus of the Berlin schools were two ticklish problems under discussion when I was there. The national views differed violently, but by no means always on Eastern and Western lines. What matters at the moment is less the actual agreements achieved than the spirit of the discussion. This is so much better than I expected, that, provided that the home governments do not stultify the work, I believe that a common policy for Berlin could be hammered out—and Berlin could be a microcosm of greater things. As a distinguished General, one of the architects of A.F.H.Q., Algiers, said to me: “Tell them at home to give us more time and a clearer policy directive. Then I believe we can pull it off—because we *must* pull it off.”

* * *

But what exactly can they pull off? Even the briefest stay in Berlin makes clear the complete difference, both in the end aimed at and in the methods used, between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. The Russian aim is simple: so to weaken Germany that she can never make war again. The methods used are first, frontier adjustments, involving the expulsion of ten million Germans; secondly, the stripping of German factories and farms; and, thirdly, the imposition of a social policy designed to exterminate the Junker industrialists and officer class and to leave in Berlin, when the Red Army withdraws, a government friendly to the Soviet Union. This policy is carried out with complete disregard either for the sufferings caused or for the effect on European economy as a whole. The defence of the Soviet Union justifies in the Russian view any means, however ruthless.

The British policy, on the other hand, seeks to remove the German danger while permitting European economy to recover. This objective—complex enough already—is still further complicated by our refusal to use methods which would cause millions of Germans to die this winter. At the moment indeed, we are so busy ensuring that Germany—or, at least, the British Zone—provides the maximum food, fuel and housing this winter, that we are grievously neglecting the task of denazification and thereby sharpening Russian suspicions. In between these opposing policies stand the Americans, anxious to pull out as soon as possible, favouring the Russian policy of “pastoralisation” on principle but fighting shy of its inevitable consequences—disease and famine. An American officer told me quite frankly that he and his colleagues were seriously disturbed by the British attitude. “There are too many factory chimneys smoking in the British Zone, for our liking. We want to smash the Germans before we get out—and many of us are getting out already. You seem as though your main interest was to put the Germans on their feet again and turn your Zone into a British colony. And those miserable French are tagging along behind you. Lately I have discussed this with Russian officers, and they share our anxiety.” When I suggested that German coal and iron were needed by all the peoples of Western Europe he looked at me with that well-known American expression which means, “Those British are outsmarting us again.” A Four-Power policy is not going to be easy to work out.

R. H. S. Crossman

(*To be continued*)

A LONDON DIARY

Mr. Bevin's statement to the House was admirably restrained. In the Conference itself he seems to have confused firmness with rudeness. Everybody will agree that there are points on which the British should stand. But the current crack that Mr. Bevin regards the Soviet Union as a breakaway from the Transport and General Workers' Union seems to contain an unpleasant measure of truth. No greater mistake could be made than to treat with disdain or ridicule the representative of a people so suspicious, so sensitive and so lacking in humour (at least against themselves) as the U.S.S.R. One of the things on which all who know Russia agree is that the Soviet Union is intensely anxious to be respected and trusted as an equal by the other Great Powers. I wonder if Mr. Bevin ever did a worse day's work than when he accused Molotov of Hitlerian methods. I hear that Molotov threatened to withdraw altogether from the Conference, and that Mr. Bevin had to apologise. There is all the difference between abuse and a courteous but firm stand on a point of principle.

* * *

Inevitably the Press tries to find a comic element in everything, and in spite of the chief actor's refusal to attend his own trial, and the tendency of witnesses to be late after their lunch, I have no doubt the Laval process was really a pretty grim affair. I am more worried about the impact of the Belsen trials. Several lessons should emerge as the result of such trials. First, it should be clear to everyone that people guilty of such sadistic abominations cannot be loose in the world and that they cannot be excused by the plea that they were acting under orders. Secondly, everyone should know that all nations contain a small proportion of such perverts, but that in a democracy they find themselves in asylums or prisons, while in a Fascist country they are deliberately chosen for responsible positions and encouraged to translate their sadistic fantasies into brutal reality. These points should be brought home both to the German and British publics. As for the sadists themselves, the only thing to do with them is to get them out of the way as soon as possible; the real pervert usually feels little shame for his action, and believes in the depth of his being that what he has done is right. Germans as a whole should be overwhelmed with shame that their country can have fallen into so deep an abyss. Unfortunately I gather that these morals are not being drawn.

* * *

From the judicial point of view, the Belsen Trial is being admirably conducted and the defence is being given all the latitude of a legal system designed at all costs to prevent an innocent man from being condemned. As a result, the proceedings are likely to become inordinately long and any hope that they will bring home to the Germans the horrors of the Concentration Camps seems likely to be frustrated. A friend of mine spent a day recently in the gallery reserved for Germans. In the morning it was packed; in the afternoon interest had waned and it was half-empty. He noticed that the German spectators were not in the least impressed by the fairness of British justice, which permitted, for instance, defending Counsel to cross-examine with great severity the prosecution witnesses. Since they assumed that the defendants would anyway be found guilty—"what else is a judge for?" one respectable shopkeeper asked—they thought the whole performance an elaborate propaganda trick and very dull at that. Nor were they any more interested by the appalling revelations made by the witnesses. Their attitude seemed to be, "why all this bother about a regrettable incident which is dead and done with?" This indifference, my friend observed, is the chief problem of German re-education. What matters for the future, said my friend, is the complete absence, even in many "good" Germans, of what we regard as the normal moral emotions.

* * *

This diagnosis is confirmed by another observer who has extensive experience of interrogating Wehrmacht officers. He talked recently to an exceptionally able young man, a University student; and asked him, casually, what he and his friends used to talk about in the evenings at the University. The young man thought for a moment and replied: "Feelings. We try them." My friend thought he had misheard and repeated the question. The young man explained that his generation could not awaken their emotions any more. Every experience was flat, and they would discuss for hours how to arrange experiences which might stimulate again their love, pity, hate or indignation. "But it never works," he ended, "We Germans can't feel any more." No doubt this particular officer was unusually self-conscious, but I am certain that he put his finger on the real disease of the German mind—indifference, or, to use the German word which says it so much better, *Gleichgueltigkeit*. . . .

* * *

The Nobel Committee has denied the report that the Nobel Prize has been awarded to Otto Hahn, the German professor who discovered "uranium fission" which is the basis of the atom bomb. I am sorry about the denial, for, if report speaks truly, Hahn was not only a great scientist, but a good internationalist who might have won the war for the Nazis if he had been willing to work for them. The story, which I've not been able to check in detail, is that Hahn discovered the secret of uranium on the eve of the war while working at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin. Faithful to the great tradition of science, he at once published his results and made them available throughout the world. An old friend and associate of Lord Rutherford, he defied the Nazi intellectual blockade and came to London and lectured on the subject. His chief collaborator, Lise Meitner, was driven out of Germany as a Jewess: she continued research in Sweden. French scientists, who were in contact with Hahn during the war, believe that he was a staunch "passive resister" to Nazi pressure. After all, the Nazis could do nothing about him. There is no way of compelling a scientist to do successful research; you can torture or kill him, but that does not produce scientific results. He seems to have gone on doing scientific work, but to have refused to further the military development of his researches. If this is a true report the Nobel Committee should confer its Peace Prize as well as its Science Prize on Otto Hahn.

* * *

The appointment of Francis Williams to the job of advising the Government on Public Relations encourages me to hope that a new wind is blowing in Whitehall. It has been a particular hobby of this journal to urge that the technique of explanation and frank statement, adopted so successfully by the Ministry of Food and sometimes by other Departments during the war, should be applied generally in all Ministries. The idea may even penetrate the War Office, which perhaps more than any other Department has the reputation of using comfortless words in its letters and telegrams. I hear that a veritable cascade of letters now threatens to submerge the Secretary of State for War. There is all the business of demobilisation; all the requests for compassionate leave; all the complaints which soldiers have the right to make about this or that grievance or supposed irregularity. They all have to be answered, and I should say that the War Office would do well to engage a larger staff, and make sure that Public Relations means not official hand-outs to the press and so forth, but the creation of a genuinely friendly relationship with the public. I believe that a move is on foot to have done with the cold and familiar formulæ. A friendly, honest and explanatory letter may remove a sense of grievance even when its content is negative. One of the jobs of a Socialist Government is to change bureaucracy into public service.

* * *

Is the average man really afraid of classical music? All I have heard from musicians who entertained the troops has led me to doubt this common belief. And now comes a bit of evidence from the cinema world. In the Odeon at Swiss Cottage the other day the organist asked the audience to indicate their preferences. Those who preferred swing and jazz to "classical" and melodious music, were to show their feelings by clapping. An appreciable number did so. But when the admirers of the classics got their chance, the applause was overwhelming, boisterous and continuous. So the organist good-naturedly played two short items of jazz for the minority and thereafter pleased the majority with selections from Grieg and Tchaikowsky. It is possible that this informal plebiscite may have been influenced to some extent by the refugee population clustered round Swiss Cottage. But I recall the experiment recently made in Sheffield, when concerts of classical music were given in public-houses by such a distinguished pianist as Franz Osborne. He found these audiences attentive and enthusiastic, and thoroughly enjoyed his contact with them.

* * *

The death of Bela Bartok has robbed the world of a master musician and a composer of genius. Like all really creative artists, Bartok's stature continued to grow right up to the end of his life, largely because (and in this he resembles Picasso) his inventive imagination compelled him to go on changing and developing both the forms and the harmonic idioms of his music. Bartok is a difficult composer, his music is often harsh and angular, and never pretty; but it is also never aimless or weak or merely ugly. Power and sensibility and a sinister, tragic vision are strikingly combined in the six string quartets—the kernel of his life-work—which are all to be given at a series of Boosey and Hawkes concerts this month. These performances should enable musical people in this country to form a more balanced judgment of Bela Bartok than has so far been forthcoming.

* * *

I was glad to hear Sir Stafford Cripps announce at the Book League's reception that book publishers' paper quota is to be raised next month from 50 per cent. to 65 per cent. of their pre-war consumption. Some excellent books long on the waiting list can now be published—provided printers and binders are also released from the Forces! Mr. Stanley Unwin rightly stressed in the *Observer* last Sunday the urgency of supplying the needs of Europe which is crying out for British books and periodicals. It is almost impossible to exaggerate this demand, and to meet it is both psychologically and economically urgent

* * *

One other story from Germany. A German producer decided to put on a play by Pirandello, and applied to the British Officer responsible for a licence. The officer replied "I had better see the fellow, who is he?" The German explained why he could not produce Pirandello for inspection, and the officer said that in that case he would have to read the play. The play was duly translated and the officer very conscientiously read it through. Then he called for the producer again. "This is a gloomy play," he said. "You Germans are pretty gloomy just now and don't want this sort of thing." And, sure enough, the play was banned.

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to D. C. Mitchell.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1

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PIT-PROPS AND PRINCIPLES

Liverpool : Tuesday.

"THIS," a police inspector said to me to-day, "is the most respectable strike I've ever seen." There have been no scenes, no scraps between pickets, police and blacklegs. The unofficial strike committee—composed entirely of rank-and-file dockers—has been efficient and kept its fifteen thousand supporters enthusiastic and disciplined. Little public feeling has been aroused in Liverpool : few people claim to understand what the strike is about—and it's worth noting that I had four different reasons given me by as many strikers—but the *Daily Express* stories of fantastic war-time earnings seem to have convinced some people that the dockers are a grasping lot, who have done well out of the war and now want to go on holding their employers to ransom.

One look at these men is enough to make that idea seem silly. They have worked hard for six years ; and in spite of bombing they kept Liverpool going as a major port without which the war might never have been won. In justice to the dockers, that should never be forgotten. And if some of them have earned good and steady wages in recent years, it's also worth recalling that one in four of them was unemployed in 1938, that a good many of them lived in some of the worst slums in England, and that they never knew whether there would be work for them when they turned up at the docks in the morning. They're suspicious, too. "Look at Merseyside," said one old man ; "the whole river is in the grip of monopolies. They run the show and they've treated us like cattle in the past." (One of the minor grievances that is being voiced by the strike committee to-day is the fact that the men are known by numbers, not names.) "The bosses will give their dogs names, but a row of bloody figures is good enough for us." And what he said about monopolies is largely true. Apart from Lever's, the L.M.S., the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and the Manchester Ship Canal Co.—which dominate the river—a high proportion of Merseyside commerce is conducted by inter-linked firms, most of which acquiesced at least in the unsatisfactory and demoralising conditions under which the men lived and worked before the war. There's no doubt that the fear of a reversion to the bad conditions of the past is at the back of many a docker's mind.

The strike itself had a small beginning. Canadian pit-props, heavier than usual, were being unloaded for a firm called Timber and Wood. The sixty men concerned claimed that for this "dirty work" they were entitled to a better rate and struck. Before long, other docks were coming out in support. The Union began to look for records of agreements with the firm and discovered that none had been reached. The firm, it soon appeared, was not a member of the Port Employers' Association. This meant complications. For under the North-West Dock Labour Scheme, sponsored by the Ministry of Labour, membership of the appropriate trade-union is virtually a condition of employment. In return, men are sent to work only to firms which are members of the Port Employers' Association, which is a party to the necessary agreements on wages and working conditions. Since Timber and Wood were not members, it would be difficult to insist that dockers should work for them.

It is clear to me that at this point somebody mishandled the whole affair, though there seems little evidence for the dockers' assertion that the mistake was more provocative than accidental. For when three hundred of the sympathetic strikers in Birkenhead applied for their books—without which they cannot be employed—they found that the books were impounded. They were then faced with the alternative of remaining out of work or returning to Birkenhead as blacklegs. And, in fact, when they reported at one of the dozen dock labour controls on Merseyside last Monday, they were ordered back to Birkenhead. This, and the tendency of the Port Employers' Association to take the side of Timber and Wood, aroused among the dockers suspicions that some people were not averse from precipitating this strike at a moment when it might discredit both the dockers—whose claim for higher basic wage-rates is under negotiation—and the new Labour Government.

After this the strike spread rapidly. The strikers elected a strike committee and raised—in addition to the local grievance—the national demand for twenty-five shillings per day, an advance of nine shillings on present rates. By Friday, Mr. T. Donovan, secretary to the docks section, T. and G. W. Union, announced that the Minister of Labour had agreed that there had been an irregularity in directing dockers to Timber and Wood, and that this issue would be dealt with immediately. Donovan evidently thought that this would be sufficient to persuade the men to return on the rest of Merseyside; for both Union officials and the port authorities were claiming on Friday that work would be resumed at the beginning of the week.

But the matter had by then passed from a question of pit-props to one of principle. The strike committee claimed the twenty-five shilling rate and a forty-hour week. The loss of overtime and special bonuses have meant a drop of anything from £3 to £6 a week in the wages of most dockers. They felt they had waited long enough for the outcome of negotiations through the "usual channels" and that a strike might expedite a decision in their favour. In any case, there seemed a chance of securing a local increase, for the North-West Area operates under a separate scheme, including special provisions that do not apply in other ports.

One stand that has been taken by the strike committee—and it has secured applause at every meeting—is particularly significant. Almost every speaker has attacked the Union officials and the established methods of negotiation. "The Union has spiked our guns," cried Callahan, the secretary of the strike committee at a meeting yesterday in Sheil Park attended by more than six thousand men. "How many of you does Donovan represent ?" No hands were raised. "Have your delegates (the paid Union officials who help operate the scheme) done their job ? At the Union elections remember that." It is clear that the dissatisfaction goes deeper than the customary abuse from unofficial strike leaders. There is a widespread feeling that the Union leaders have become just a part of the whole set-up of employers, the Government, and compulsory arbitration. And the docks are not the only places where this complaint is heard to-day.

In the tram on the way out to Sheil Park an old docker was recalling a meeting there in 1917, when Tom Mann was chased down West Derby Road by an angry crowd. "But we've won in the end," he said ; "*our* men are in power." There wasn't a man yesterday who didn't share that view. Half-way through the meeting, Callahan called for a vote of confidence in the Labour Government. Every hand was raised. "We want to get back to work," he said, "but we would like the Government to come down and put the Fifth Columnists in their place. It's the employers that are holding us up ; they're responsible for this strike." Wild words, but with bite in them. The men strongly believe that the employers are more concerned to embarrass the Government than to get the port working again. And whether that's true or not, it won't be an easy idea to dispel. When the meeting passed a resolution demanding intervention by the Ministries of Labour and War Transport within three days, the men felt that it was *their* Government they were calling in to deal with a common opponent. And when they cheered a vote of thanks to the crews of two American ships that refused to allow blackleg labour to work them, these dockers were cheering what seemed to them a fine example of international solidarity.

Who is running the strike ? None of the strike committee have previously been very prominent ; yet, for inexperienced leaders, they show considerable ability. There have been the usual rumours of "hidden hands," but nobody can say anything definite when pressed. There is a small group of Trotskyists in the docks who call themselves "Revolutionary Communists," but I was unable to find evidence that any of the strike leaders were either members or stooges of the Revolutionary Communists. An offer of £30 from this R.C.P. was publicly refused at a meeting on Saturday, the committee claiming this as proof of their independence. (Though this was loudly cheered it does not necessarily prove anything of the sort ; it is just what any political cell would do if it wished to cover up its activities). As for the official Communists, they have throughout done what they could to limit the strike and secure a settlement by negotiation. They are now telling the men that, though it was right to attract public attention by raising the demand for a national increase in basic rates, they mustn't think that the matter can simply be settled locally. "Start attacking your Union officials and the established negotiating machinery like this," they say, "and you'll play into the hands of every reactionary employer on Merseyside. They'll be only too pleased to see weaker unions and an end of compulsory arbitration." But, so far, this kind of argument isn't popular. The men think they suffer more than the employers from the Dock Labour Scheme. And when they hear of the strike spreading to Sunderland and elsewhere, they feel that twenty thousand can't be wrong. As one striker, telling me of the men's hatred for the employers, said : "We are sure that the strike was forced on us for ulterior motives. The employers are trying to undermine our position." While we were talking, another man joined us and added the news that the ship repair employers had given notice to end local war-time agreements affecting twenty-five thousand men. The first speaker turned triumphantly to me and said : "There you are ; same as after t' last war. They are starting to drive us down again. You see, they'll force t' repair men to strike next."

Whether or not there is any reason for these fears, this strike has three clear lessons. First, the Union machinery, accustomed during the war to act as a semi-official agency, has become stiff and does not readily respond to the changing moods among the men, with the result that the men feel their leaders are more like civil servants than popular tribunes. Second, the men have a deep dislike of their employers—reinforced by the suspicion that they wish to prejudice the success of what, to the men, is "their" Government. Third, if compulsory arbitration and worker-employer collaboration is to continue, some way must be found to persuade the men that a great deal depends on their willingness to make the capitalist sectors of industry work efficiently until they become State property. Unless these lessons are learned quickly, "unofficial" mass movements may not be confined to the docks.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

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"FINDINGS KEEPINGS"

If you should have the misfortune to lose a bowl of goldfish, the wheel of an eighteenth-century cannon, or perhaps a ship's funnel, you would be wrong not to make enquiries about it. At least one each of these remained in the hands of the railway companies or the police last year, unconsidered trifles left unclaimed by the losers because, no doubt, they would think them irresistible to the snapper-up.

All large transport undertakings maintain an efficient organisation for dealing with lost property, and the fact that such vast numbers of articles are never claimed may go far to encourage them, as finders-by-proxy, in the view that findings may as well be keepings. In this matter, apparently, the railway companies' procedure differs from that of the police in one or two important respects. If you find a book that someone has left in a railway carriage, and take it to the lost property office at one of the stations or hand it to a railway servant, you do not get a receipt for it and you will *not* be told that, if it remains unclaimed after a certain time, you have the right to claim it for yourself. Yet the Common Law as to "rights of finders" is that the finder of a lost article has a lawful right to it as against everyone but the true owner. It is probable that, unless the article is in the possession of the railway company in its capacity as a common carrier (e.g., as luggage) the company has no lien on it if it is lost in any public part of their premises or system. The finder's rights attach to the book found in the carriage, no less than if he found it in the street.

It is true that the conditions under which a passenger's ticket is issued generally contain a clause claiming any articles found in the carriages, but the clause gives the companies, at the most, a civil remedy for breach of contract in the case of a passenger who "finds and keeps"; a cumbersome remedy which they would find inadequate if their passengers were more litigious. If, rather than hand the book to the railway company, the finder takes it to a police station and says he found it in a train, the police, apparently, will return it to the railway company and not give him a receipt for it. But if he finds it in the street, the police will give him a receipt that informs him of his right to recover it after a certain time (one, two or three months—the practice varies) if it is not in the meantime claimed by the person who lost it.

From this follow other important differences. Both railway companies and the police dispose of unclaimed found property by public auction, but in the case of the police the proceeds go to public funds, and in the case of the railways they swell the revenue of a private undertaking. Moreover, the property so disposed of by the police can with greater accuracy be called "unclaimed," because (1) its finding has been notified to police over a wide area so that any report of its loss may not be missed; (2) if it is of a certain minimum value it has also been advertised in the public press as found property; and (3) if it bears any indication of its ownership (such as identifying papers in a wallet, handbag, or suitcase) any such clues are always carefully followed up. Property handed to the railways, on the other hand, will not as a rule be the subject of any such solicitude for the owner, unless an insurance company addresses an enquiry to the railway. An interesting development of the railway lost property auctions is that some of the quick-turnover merchants who secure the stuff under the hammer make a practice of setting up shop (with perambulating sandwichmen outside) under the delusive, though not inaccurate, title of "Railway Lost Property Office"—delusive because many people believe that in buying an umbrella there they are buying direct, at a knockdown price, from the railway company.

The rule of law establishing the "rights of finders" has the effect that the citizen is under no obligation to take a found article to the police or any other authority, provided he does something at least equivalent as a step towards tracing the owner. The railways operate a lost property system which successfully disregards this rule; but the bus and tram companies enjoy the protection of a Statutory Rule and Order which *requires* passengers, under penalty, to hand to the driver or conductor anything they find inside the vehicle. A man who recently found twelve one-pound notes in a bus, and handed them to the conductor, wrote to the bus company after three months to say that he would like the money if it was still unclaimed; and he was told that half of it had gone to the company's funds and the other half to their employees' benevolent association. If he had elected to say he found it in the street, the money would have been his. Perhaps someone, some day, may challenge in the Courts the validity of a Regulation which so blandly disregards the Common Law rights of finders.

At one time the law said that if a man lost goods, and they were found by someone else who did not know of the owner and converted them to his own use, this was not stealing—even if the finder denied all knowledge of the affair or hid the goods away. It is still the law that a man who finds and appropriates lost property, really believing when he does so that the owner cannot be found, commits no larceny; nor if he reasonably believes that the owner of the property has intentionally abandoned it, or that there is no chance of discovering the owner by taking reasonable steps. But if you pick up a lost article with the intention to convert it to your own use in spite of a reasonable belief that the owner could be found, you are guilty of "stealing by finding." And isn't this what most finders do?

The position is made fairly clear by Section 1 of the Larceny Act, 1916. "Taking" is an element in larceny; and taking includes "obtaining the possession by finding, where *at the time* of the finding *the finder believes* that the owner can be discovered by taking reasonable steps." So the question is, not whether the finder could have traced the owner, but whether he believed he could; and the latter is by far the more difficult to prove. The obvious "reasonable step" to take, of course, is to hand the article to the police. But if you prefer it you can write to the police and tell them the article is at your house or office where they can see it if they want to, that you are going to retain it while they try to find the owner, and that you will keep it as your own if they do not succeed. It's as well to know, however, that whether you keep it from the very first or recover it from the police as "unclaimed" after the usual period, it never becomes your absolute property unless, at some time, evidence is forthcoming that it was abandoned by its former owner; failing this, the true owner can claim it from you at any time, however long after.

So the police have no power to demand that you deliver up to them the gold watch that you have found. How about the railway company? "We only sold you a ticket," they say, "on condition that you should hand to us any lost property you might find in the train." Very well; that is a contract, and presumably you agreed to it. But you have decided now that you will not relinquish the gold watch, because you think the contract violates one of your Common Law rights as a citizen. If they want the watch, they must sue you for it. Well, they have tried this at least once, in the case of *Great Western and Metropolitan Railway Company v. Emanuel* (1866). Mr. Joel Emanuel was a law student, and he found a purse containing one penny in a railway carriage and refused to give it up. He reported his find at the railway station and gave his address, where the owner might have it on application; but he insisted on his right to retain it as the finder. The company sued him in Marylebone County Court for recovery of the purse and £50 damages for its improper detention; and they lost the day. The Judge said the question was whether a purse in a passenger's pocket was "such luggage accompanying him on his journey as would render the company bailees by a constructive delivery and give them the right to recover it from a third party having found it in one of the carriages." He decided that this was not the case. "Mr. Emanuel had a right to the purse," he said, "although found upon the floor of a carriage belonging to the railway company, for it was never under their protection before it was lost."

That the whole question needs attention by the legislators was made clear enough in a recent action before Mr. Justice Birkett in the High Court. In August, 1940, a soldier occupying an upstairs room in a requisitioned house used as a sick-bay was adjusting the black-out curtains when he touched something loose, which fell on to the window-ledge. He found it to be a brooch covered with cobwebs and dirt, and handed it to his C.O., who in turn passed it to the police. Two years later the police, having failed to discover the real owner (it was neither the freeholder of the house nor its previous occupant), handed the brooch to the freeholder. He sold it for £66 to a jeweller, who resold it for £88. In June this year the soldier brought an action against the freeholder, claiming the brooch as finder and arguing that he had a good title to it against all the world except the true owner. The freeholder contended that the brooch was on his property, and that his claim was superior. Mr. Justice Birkett found that the law was that "a man has possession of everything attached to or under his land, but not necessarily of a thing lying unattached on the surface, even if that thing were not in the possession of anyone else." He thought the soldier had the best claim to the brooch; and as it had been disposed of and could not now be recovered, the freeholder of the premises must pay the soldier £66 and costs.

"Findings were keepings," therefore, in his case. They may prove to be keepings in any case, if you ascertain what the law is and then give it a chance to take its course.

C. H. Rolph

RADIO NOTES

In the October issue of *Britain To-day* the astute Mr. Robert Silvey gives an interesting account of the operations of the Listener Research department. Few thinking persons blame the B.B.C. for making use of some such organisation, and most of those who have had experience of it from the producer's angle would, I believe, admit that it does provide a better, more balanced, indication of what listeners on the whole think of broadcasts than anything that could be obtained from taking a cross-section of Programme Correspondence. Letters are written in the heat of anger or enthusiasm (usually the former), while the Research panels are composed of people who—whatever their intellectual attainments may be—are, many of them, experienced listeners with a definite object in view. This is all to the good; but the margin of error, of crass prejudice and inattention is, I think, bound to be still somewhat larger than Mr. Silvey would have us suppose. His main objection to an opinion founded on letters from stray listeners is, apparently, that these always show "a concentration on broadcasts of an intentionally provocative character." I disagree, for I am certain producers receive quite as many letters about programmes which have no provocative intention whatsoever; and—what is more—many a Listener Research report reveals the same misconception. The chief trouble, in this matter, is that the reception of a broadcast is affected by an absurdly large number of imponderables—the hour of day, what the listener happens to be doing, the quality of his set, the character of the preceding programme and so on—about which the writer and producer are powerless to do anything; and although Mr. Silvey claims to allow for these in running his organisation, it is fairly plain that in practice the result leaves a good deal to be desired. People do not usually go to the theatre or cinema or concert hall when they are ill or tired or harassed or cross; they listen to radio when they are any or all of these things and their letters or reports reflect their state of mind even when they think they are being "objective" in their judgment. The sense of occasion, which everyone has when he leaves his home to be entertained in public, does much to dispose him favourably, to smooth down his prejudices and sharpen his wits—advantages upon which radio cannot count. The actual listening figures for a single broadcast do, it is evident, furnish a perfectly real and exact indication, of a kind; and to these it is worth while paying attention. But as long as it remains possible to forecast, down even to the form of words, what the Research panel is going to say about any given programme, opinion must remain sceptical of the value of the institution. No such scheme could, of course, ever be expected to function more than approximately; and not much harm is done so long as this is realised. Unfortunately, there is a good deal of evidence that those in power rely, to an unreasonable degree, upon these findings. What is most urgently needed, I venture to suggest, is (1) a much wider casting of the net, and (2) a more constant change in the personnel of each Listener Research panel.

Dobson and Young—the sorcerer and his apprentice. Dobson spreads ideas, fanwise, before our eyes, says "Look!" and all of a sudden the cards have changed. "Wait! Let me have another look. I begin to see . . ." we exclaim; but already the conjurer has started another trick and we are comforted into silence by a fresh perception. This technique is new to radio and, to my mind, extraordinarily clever and successful. I shall be much surprised if the children who listen to Dobson and Young's new series fail to learn from it what music is about.

Christian Darnton's Third Symphony not only showed a very marked improvement on anything this composer has so far done, but seemed to me to place him among the few young British composers who must be seriously reckoned with. It is difficult to say anything very useful about this work on the score of a single performance; but one can at least point to the arrestingly clean lines on which it is built, as well as to an harmonic scheme which, in spite of a somewhat rebarbative slow movement, shows how greatly Mr. Darnton has extended his range of feeling.

Postscript.—I regret that, in my review of Rheinberger's Mass in a recent issue of this paper, I mistakenly attributed the performance to the choir of St. Mary Redcliff at Bristol. It appears that the choir was the West Country Singers, conducted by Reginald Redman.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*October 14th.* Mendelssohn Violin Concerto (Thibaud, 2.30); Recital: Elisabeth Schumann (9.30).

October 15th. "The Orchestral Composer at Work" (L.P. 3.0); Triple Bill (Plays by Maurice Baring, Emlyn Williams, Gogol, 9.15); Music by D'Indy and Roussel (11.15).

October 16th. Prokofieff Sinfonietta (7.25); Recital: Orloff (10.15).

October 17th. Beethoven Violin Sonata in G, op. 96 (1.15); Dvorak Cello Concerto (Casals, 8.9); "Is there Anything in It?"—1. Telepathy (10.0).

October 18th. "Wavell's Choice" (Anthology, 11.3 p.m.).

October 19th. Stravinsky Four Norwegian Moods (1.10); "Weep for Polyphemus" (Denis Johnston, 8.0).

October 20th. Symphony Concert (Beecham, 2.30).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

HENRY IV—PART II

ALTHOUGH the performance of *Henry IV* at the New Theatre may be the best that we shall see in our generation, a production displaying so much talent and enterprise in the service of genius that even the spectators are made to feel they are sharing in the glory, still nothing has been done to make good the chief inferiority of *Part II*—the fact that much of it is a feeble echo of *Part I*. The Earl of Northumberland revolts again, with less of a dog's chance than ever. The very life-blood of his enterprise and our interest is infected from the first by the disappearance of Hotspur and Glendower. Soldiers trot still more perfunctorily across the stage to even ungorier battles. Prince Hal, starting once more practically from scratch, has to begin all over again the dreary business of proving that as soon as the breath has left his father's body he will start winning the battle of Agincourt. In his Old Vic production the "little touch of Harry" is played for all it is worth; but as in *Part I*, that dramatic contrast, the very different touch of old Harry, his predatory and mendacious father, is buried, in spite of clues woven by Shakespeare into the part beneath the unyielding nobility of Mr. Hannen's countenance. The result is that the business of Hal wearing the crown in the death chamber is played as soundly and as lifelessly as ever, seeming nothing more and nothing less than one of those speechy scenes, truer to the theatre than to life, which Shakespeare sometimes inserted for the sake of the actor at the expense of the play.

This production makes us see more clearly than ever before that Shakespeare in *Part II* lost interest in the nobles and became absorbed in the character of Falstaff and the study of riotous youth in decay. We see Falstaff brought face to face with the great mysteries, the only solid man, not only in flesh, but in spirit, among an attendant chorus of ghostly eccentrics. It is probably a right decision that to play Pistol, Bardolph and Mrs. Quickly thicker than cardboard is to overlay the stage with character. Mr. Olivier, on the other hand, is tremendously funny as a Shallow for whom the only reality is Falstaff, on whose every word he hangs, and every part of whose life he tries to identify in fantasy with his own. This Shallow, and Miles Malleson's Silence (concentrating so hard on concentration that he is unable to take anything in), provide the best comic performances in London. Yet all these characters resemble the apt incidental music of Mr. Menges or the pertinent *décor* of Mr. Parks in that they are made a background only to the theme of Falstaff. They steal the play from the court scenes only because there is more poetry and magic in any of their prose sentences than in fifty lines of the stock blank verse given to the noblemen. Jane Nightwork "must be old, she can't chance but be old, certain she's old; and had Robin Nightwork, by old Nightwork, before I came to Clements Inn . . . That's fifty-five years ago."

So long ago—this might be the theme of the play, as it certainly is of one scene—the Boar's-head Tavern scene, the playing of which seemed to me nearly perfect. Doll Tearsheet is too often acted as she appears through the eyes of the Prince and Poins—"some road . . . as common as the way between St. Albans and London," as brazen and as hard against affection, and so fit a subject for endless jokes about drabbing and disease that we have to be careful not to be guilty of a superior laugh at the expense of the "spacious days." But Miss Joyce Redman, surely, plays Doll more as Shakespeare saw her, weakly, warm-heartedly dissolving into debauch, in a perpetual Irish day-dream, eddying through her short life like an uprooted water plant in the shallows of Lough Derg.

So that when the music plays, and the boy goes to sleep, and Falstaff sits sadly down with Doll, we are left marvelling at Shakespeare's compassion. It is the old dance—and thus we are prepared for the line round which the rest of the scene seems to have been written. "When wilt thou begin to patch up thy old body for heaven?" asks Doll, and Falstaff answers: "Peace . . . do not speak like a death's head, do not bid me remember my end." Suddenly Falstaff's word has become the theme of the play and "the best in this kind are but shadows" has become Shakespeare's thought beneath the word.

STEPHEN POTTER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Mrs. Warren's Profession," at the Torch.

What a staggering play this must have seemed in 1894! Of course no Victorian audience ever saw it; the Lord Chamberlain held it up for thirty years. It is still fresh and vivid in 1945. True, the bold, bad villain and the clergyman with a past and his ne'er-do-well, but attractive son are period-pieces. But the two main ideas in the play have been unaffected by the passage of time. The first is at the core of all Shaw's early work. The good and innocent discover the hypocrisy and wickedness of the successful; the successful retort by showing that they, too, are the products of an evil social system. The moral can still be applied to slum landlords and brothel-keepers. The second basis of the play is the dramatic situation of the hard-headed, modern young woman who discovers the truth about her sentimental and disreputable mother who has paid for her education out of ill-earned money. Making the best use of their tiny stage, the team at the Torch Theatre gave a very intelligent and competent performance. Olga Edwardes as Vivie and Constance Fecher as Mrs. Warren are both excellent, and they are well supported by all the cast. The monstrous financial conditions of the West End theatre still put a high premium on second-rate drama, and C.E.M.A. would do well to encourage these small dramatic groups. They are doing a world of good wherever they have a chance.

THE RAW MATERIAL OF HAPPINESS

By the red of the poppy, by the red of the peony,
By the urn of the nasturtium,
    This girl is mine.

By the month of green and the month of gold,
By the nettles of righteousness,
By each lullaby for an unwanted child,
By the moon that is a wild fowl and nests among
  the chimneys,
    This girl is mine.

At the hour of the scorpion, of the conservative
  lemmings,
When earthquakes and submarine disasters crack
  the scab of continents,
When another moon is flung aside from some raw
  littoral,
  O daylight owl, my mind, go back.

For the love of the tare for the wheat,
For the loaded spring of the mind by day,
For the window-pane of the mind at night covered
  by dreams with frosty fossil traceries,
    Quieten this heart.

The strength of grass,
The loneliness of pain,
The left wing of the day of judgment,
    Witness this pact.

O blossoms of smoke on the wind, the wind that
  ends winter,
O pewter moon on the river,
O comma of the sea-shell, query of the fountain,
  exclamation of the unicorn, period of the opal,
    Indicate my North-West Passage to her!

A. WALTER MARSDEN

Correspondence

GREEK ELECTIONS

SIR,—In your issue of September 1st (which has only just reached me) Major Wilkes presented a correct account of a Greek incident of which he himself has personal knowledge. Unfortunately the relation of factual personal experiences tends to give undue authority to arguable opinions, and as a Socialist who, like Major Wilkes, was in Greece throughout the troubles, and for some six months after, I should like to suggest the dangers of the conclusions implicit in his letter.

The arrest of M. Dallas in Kalamata is only one of many similar incidents which have occurred in all parts of Greece. Nor is the imprisonment of a just and able citizen the worst crime of which the executives of the Plastiras and Voulgaris Governments have been guilty: accounts of beatings-up, of arming of Royalist bands, and of occasional shootings are documented through British as well as through E.A.M. channels. The conclusion that seems inevitably to follow from knowledge of these facts is that the Voulgaris Government must go. What is the alternative? An avowedly Royalist Government instead of a "non-party" Government which at least claims to be attempting to be impartial? Obviously not. A Centre party Government opposed to E.A.M.? Tried by Plastiras, attacked by Right and Left, overthrown by a Royalist manœuvre, whereupon E.A.M. claimed Plastiras as a martyr to the people's cause. Neither extreme would accept another Centre Government and anyway the leaders of the Centre cannot agree among themselves. An all-party Government? Tried by Papandreou, failed because of irreconcilable disagreements. At the end of July, after the British election result, the Regent found in exploratory discussions that he couldn't even begin to form an all-party Government with any prospect of cohesion. The only alternatives are, therefore, for Voulgaris to stay or for a Government to be formed solely from the E.A.M. parties, with, of course, as many members of the Left Centre as would join.

The object to be attained in Greece is the creation of conditions in which free elections can be held and the will of the people find expression (for no observer can determine what, politically, the majority of the people really do want). The record of E.L.A.S. in Peloponneus in September '44 before Major Wilkes and other British officers intervened, the increased bitterness caused by the insurrection and by present Right-wing excesses, the now common talk among K.K.E. members of the "third round" (which in Greece does not merely mean knocking your opponent out), do not support the suggestion that an E.A.M. Government would be any more intent on creating conditions for free elections than the present one appears to be. The fundamental trouble is, of course, that in Greece so violent are political hatreds (starting from Venizelos versus Constantine in the last war, embittered by the shooting by Plastiras of the Royalist Ministers in 1922 and the purge of Venizelists carried out by the Royalists in 1935, forced underground by Metaxas, and now re-erupting into a third element, the Communist, as a result of economic changes and the war) that it is well-nigh impossible to find men who can be given command of policemen or soldiers and who will use that command with justice, even assuming that Governmental directives enjoin impartiality.

If the solution of effective British control for a generation is ruled out (no shorter period would be sufficient for these hatreds to die), then we must accept the fact that conditions of democratic freedom acceptable to Britain and America cannot be created. That being so, the quoting of incidents from one side or the other is irrelevant: but I would submit that after our policy in December—right or wrong—we could exert no influence at all over an E.A.M. Government towards creating conditions for free elections. Extend that influence by all means, ensure that it is being exerted in the right direction (and my knowledge of the Police Mission to the Greek gendarmerie now taking over internal security duties leads me to hope that it will be), but let us not create conditions in which we shall be compelled to leave these unhappy people at the mercy of their own cruelty, and in which we shall be debarred from playing any part in endeavouring to ameliorate a tragic situation.

British Officer

BORSTAL

Sir,—The official explanation does nothing to diminish the shock with which we receive the announcement that part of Dartmoor Prison is to be used as a Boys' Borstal. Recently thousands of evacuees returned to our cities, to-day Servicemen are being demobilised and war-workers are coming back to their peace-time jobs. These movements must be leaving many camps and hostels empty throughout the country. Allowing that it is best that boys committed to Borstal should have to spend months in local prisons, could not some of these now vacant premises be used to relieve the situation?

This much is certain. The use of Dartmoor cannot solve the problem; it can but relieve the congestion. And to view the problem merely as one of congestion is to regard boys committed to Borstal as so many herds, not as so many human beings requiring care and attention and help.

The long and the short of it is that Dartmoor provides an easy way out for the Prison Commissioners. It happens to be theirs to dispose of, as Army camps and workers' hostels are not.

The Approved School branch of the Home Office has set a precedent the Prison Commissioners would do well to study. During the war a set of buildings originally designated for the accommodation of war workers (by the Ministry of Supply, I think) was taken over as an Approved School. I refer to what is now Aycliffe School, accommodating 300–400 boys. Aycliffe is not an ideal premises for the work, but is infinitely better than Dartmoor.

The easy way out chosen by the Prison Commissioners provides for the establishment of a Borstal Institution in circumstances to which these are but a few amongst many obvious objections:—

(*a*) Dartmoor has a tradition peculiar to itself—in everybody's mind it symbolises the worst in our prison system.

(*b*) The buildings are universally condemned as archaic.

(*c*) Boys will go there with even greater reluctance than to any other Borstal, and will therefore be unco-operative from the outset.

(*d*) Borstal staffs are doubtless praying day and night not to be asked to go to the Moor. Are those whose prayers are to go unanswered likely to be an ideal staff?

Kenneth Robertson

Green Place,
Bull Lane, Gerrard's Cross.

STATE MEDICAL SERVICE

Sir,—Your correspondent Richie Calder's otherwise excellent article on a "State Medical Service" would appear to be based on false premises.

The first paragraph of this article states: "The B.M.A. . . . has been fighting a clumsy rearguard action ever since against a salaried State Medical Service. The Election showed what the public wants; and the doctors may now prove more amenable." It being assumed that at the Election the public demonstrated its eagerness for a State salaried Medical Service.

This, however, is not so. The statement of Labour Party policy that the public did vote for was (as set out in Section IX of Labour Party policy pamphlet *Let Us Face the Future*):—

> "In addition the best health services should be available to all. Money must no longer be the passport to the best treatment.
>
> In the new National Health Service there should be health centres where the people may get the best that modern science can offer, more and better hospitals, and proper conditions for our doctors and nurses. . . ."

A comprehensive Health Service with health centres can, in fact, be run in two ways. EITHER by a State-salaried Medical Service; OR by a capitation fee system, such as (but not necessarily identical with) the National Health Insurance system at present in operation, which in its working guarantees a considerable measure of professional independence. As a doctor, and a Liberal, I would like to point out that the difference between the two is a vital matter of principle that concerns the welfare of both doctor and patient—not least, the patient. Since *Let Us Face the Future* contains no mention whatever of a State-salaried Medical Service, the Labour Government has surely no mandate for the introduction of one to any substantial extent without a further consultation with the electorate?

Croydon Wilds,
Bladon,
Woodstock, Oxon.

Donald McI. Johnson,
M.B., B.Ch.

DEMOBILISATION

Sir,—I wish to point out a grave injustice which is evident in the working of the R.A.F demobilisation scheme. Releases from the various trades still continue at a very uneven rate, although with the cessation of the Japanese war there can be no justification for this. This is most flagrant in the case of Meteorological Air Observers. Alone out of all the trades in the R.A.F. there are to be no releases whatever from this aircrew category during the months of November

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JONATHAN CA

and December. We are neither told how long this ban will continue, nor are we given any reason for such arbitrary action.

It might be justified if the majority of Meteorological Air Observers were in low release groups. This is not so. The majority are in high release groups. In this squadron only three have release groups below 40. It might be justified if we were doing an essential job of work. This is not so; we fly on an average only once every three weeks.

It is surely time that such manifestly unjustified breaches of the letter and spirit of the Government's demobilisation scheme should cease. That scheme was fair and had the support of the majority of Servicemen. But there must be something radically wrong with its working when men can be retained for an unstated period beyond their normal release time, through the whim of such a minor department of the Air Ministry as the Meteorological Office.

British Forces in Iceland. FLIGHT SERGEANT

SIR,—It's good news that University students are now to be released under Class B. But what of the unfortunates (there must be quite a lot of us) who haven't been able to start their University courses?

At 23 I am in my fourth year of service. My release group is 47. My application for admission to a Cambridge college reposes somewhere in their files, and can't even be considered until I can say with some degree of certainty when I shall be free.

Now here's the rub. I want to read English, with a view to teaching. If I'm very lucky, I may be released by October, 1947. I shall then be 25. A three-year degree course and another year teacher's training will put me into my thirtieth year, and I shan't have earned a cent. (in fact, unless I obtain the Government grant, I shall be heavily in the red). I shan't be able to marry, which means either sin or celibacy, until I'm 30: a thought which doesn't please me.

If I had any common sense I'd throw up the whole idea: but being an obstinate type I shan't. Nevertheless I can't help reflecting that I should be much better off as a civil servant or as a one-year-trained teacher at £15 a year less. Others who are more career-minded than myself may give up.

Suggestion: The Government might allow all those who intend applying for grants under the Further Education scheme to submit their applications now, instead of after their Class A release. Those whose applications were approved—even if they didn't qualify for financial help—could be released Class B. There would only be two or three thousand of them.

SERGEANT, R.A.F.

KENYA

SIR,—I have read with some interest your comment last week on the new plan for the administration of Kenya. Without wishing to defend the Kenya Government or even to justify the actions of the British Government it seems to me that your comment was rather off the lines. The new scheme, far from being devised by the Caretaker Government or taken over by the Labour Government, was, in fact, an accomplished fact with all the consequential changes made in Kenya by the time Labour came into office. So far as I know, the new plan was not devised in London, but, in fact, in Kenya, and was not a constitutional change, but rather a local adjustment of administrative machinery to secure more time for the consideration of action in matters of development. Further, beyond the cautionary statement by the African Member, the plan was not opposed in the Kenya Legislative Council by the Africans themselves. Major Cavendish-Bentinck, the European who has been appointed to a position of executive authority, now becomes an official representative answerable to Government and working under the direction of the Government.

House of Commons. GEORGE BROWN

PLIGHT OF THE DEAF

SIR,—The recent correspondence on this subject in your columns has been of great interest to me, as some years before the war, owing to the onset of deafness, I designed and built myself a two-valve amplifier. This has been in almost constant use since then, the only change being the renewal of batteries. The cost of such an instrument by one of the proprietary firms would be in the region of £25 to £30. The cost to me was as follows:—

Earpiece (Peto-Scott)	£2	2	0
Microphone (P.O. type)		9	0
Valves, 2 ("Hivac Midget") 10*s.* 6*d.* ea.	1	1	0
Transformers, 2 (Bulgin), 3*s.* 6*d.* ea.		7	0
Miscellaneous parts (switch, V.C. valve-holders, etc.)		5	0
	£4	4	0

All these prices are for components bought over the counter. The usual trade discount which would operate if the sets were made commercially would be in the region of 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. The batteries I use are the usual Exide 45 v., which usually last up to three or four months, at a cost of 5*s.* each, and ordinary 3 v. cycle-lamp batteries, at 1*s.* 1*d.* each, giving anything up to 10 or 12 hours' continuous use. These are also bought over the counter.

With regard to design, any sixth-form schoolboy could design an amplifier of this type and make it without much trouble. The accumulated experience of the war-time "walkie-talkie" sets should make the deaf-aids of the future much smaller and more convenient. Even before the war one manufacturer of radio components listed a set of parts for a deaf-aid to be constructed at home—on the lines of a home-constructed radio—for an inclusive cost of £10. This was in Messrs. Bulgin's 1939 list, I believe.

I am glad you have raised the matter in your columns, as if these facts were well known, somebody *might be persuaded to do something about it.*

153 Sylvia Avenue,
Bristol, 3.

W. L. GOODMAN

THE LIBERAL VOTE

SIR,—The Ashton-under-Lyne by-election provides a significant test of the way Liberals will vote in the absence of a Liberal candidate. At the by-election, there was a Liberal candidate: at the general election there was a straight fight between Conservative and Labour.

The percentages of votes cast were:

	General Election	By-Election
Labour	56	54
Conservative	44	35
Liberal	—	11

Assuming that, at the General Election, the Liberal vote was distributed between Conservative and Labour and that the reductions in Conservative and Labour percentages at the by-election are due to the transfer of these votes to the Liberal candidate, it follows that, of every 11 Liberal votes, 9 went to the Conservative and only two to Labour at the General Election.

As a defeated Labour candidate, these figures leave me with a feeling of real regret that my Liberal opponent did not succeed in getting more votes than he did!

J. STEWART COOK

Crossways, Osborne Road, Windsor.

BOTTLENECKS

SIR,—By calling up foundry workers ("Polycritic" writes in your issue of September 29th) Mr. Isaacs is causing "the biggest bottleneck in engineering." The context shows that he means the worst, narrowest or most constricting bottleneck. Is such a bottleneck really the biggest?

Something about the bottleneck seems to make journalists mad. I gather from a leading article in another journal that "bottlenecks must be ironed out." Somebody should compile an anthology.

London. HENRY STRAUSS

[Noted.—Bottlenecks are narrow in future, not big. —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

TO-DAY, when almost every subject of first-rate biographical interest has been handled and re-handled, used and mis-used, the prospective biographer can still fall back upon a comforting reflection: we know little more of the nature of the creative gift—of its origins and development, of its connection with a writer's social circumstances on the one hand, his physical constitution on the other—than did Johnson when he wrote the *Lives of the Poets* or Boswell when he introduced the modern art of biography by compiling the *Life of Johnson*. The mechanism of the creative impulse remains largely unexplored. We have grasped the fact that the experiences of early youth—for example, Baudelaire's jealous love of his mother and hatred of his step-father—may give a specially acute twist to the direction of a writer's talent: that physical flaws—Sterne's consumptive tendency, or the disease of the inner ear that distracted Jonathan Swift—may exert a profound influence on the artist's character and outlook. But we cannot decide why the same factors, that cause breakdown and disintegration in ninety-nine out of a hundred perplexed and tormented human beings, in the hundredth or the thousandth become a source of spiritual strength and creative energy: why some minds have a knack of maintaining their conflicts in a state of fruitful equilibrium: why an artist may fail in life to succeed on the plane of art.

Beside this central problem, any fresh discoveries a biographer may make have a merely relative importance; and there is an obvious danger that the critic who casts some new sidelight upon an artist's psychological background will give the impression that he thinks he has *explained* him. Such an impression—perhaps inadvertently—has been conveyed both by Mr. Edmund Wilson, in his essay on Rudyard Kipling, published among other penetrating essays in *The Wound and the Bow*, and by Kipling's latest biographer, Mr. Hilton Brown, whose extremely provocative monograph, *Rudyard Kipling: A New Appreciation* (Hamish Hamilton, 10*s.* 6*d.*), appeared last month. Each helps to elucidate Kipling, assembles and arranges some illuminating scraps of information: neither can explain why his peculiar personal genius took the course it did. Each study, nevertheless, contains some brilliant guesswork. They agree, for instance, that a miserable childhood, when Kipling and his sister were abandoned by their parents to the care of sadistic guardians, followed by the brutalities of an English public school, left scars on the writer's spirit that stayed with him all his life; and that the experience of having been very much bullied and, for several impressionable years, being very much afraid, may have determined Kipling's attitude to the forces of law and order. He emerged from jungle-life with a respect for the law of the jungle. Himself weak and physically dependent, he had learned to despise those "lesser breeds without the law" who constitute under an imperialist system nature's subject-races. There was a moment, says Edmund Wilson, when his outlook was more liberal and the range of his social sympathies was far more generous. Did he not prophesy the evolution of a many-rooted American race?—

> Wait till the Anglo-American-German-Jew—the Man of the Future—is properly equipped . . . He'll carry the English lungs above the Teuton feet that can walk forever; and he will wave long, thin, bony Yankee hands with the big blue veins on the wrist, from one end of the earth to the other. He'll be the finest writer, poet and dramatist . . . that the world as it recollects itself has ever seen. By virtue of his Jew blood—just a little, little drop—he'll be a musician and a painter, too.

But, alas! Kipling's residence in America (which lasted from 1892 to 1896) was cut short by an undignified quarrel with his troublesome and truculent American brother-in-law. His daughter, Josephine, whom he appears to have loved more deeply and devotedly than he loved any other human being, died in New York on his brief return to America during the year 1899; and Kipling fled for refuge to the solid amenities of conservative English life. According to Wilson's view, he "invoked the protection of the British system and at the same time prostrated himself before the power of British conquest —" He became the prophet of imperialist expansion, at a juncture when the imperial dream had reached its headiest stages.

So far the historian elucidates; and at this point it is not difficult for the critic, particularly if he belongs to the Left Wing, to absolve himself from further effort by relapsing into a condition of voluntary amnesia. He need only recapitulate some of Kipling's better-known and more unpleasing phrases—to remind himself of the admiration of brute force that appears in many stories, to recall *The Mark of the Beast* with its sadistic imagery, or the "dose of cleaning-rod" which Tommy Atkins boasts of having handed out to various recalcitrant and unappreciative "niggers." Kipling would be easy to damn, were a writer's value in direct proportion to that of his social and political philosophy. As "thinkers" or political soothsayers, artists, even the finest, are often conspicuously misguided. Kipling was an extraordinarily accomplished artist; and what is significant is not the worth of his opinions themselves so much as the artistic use to which he put them, and the intellectual limitations that he revealed by adopting them so uncritically and so wholeheartedly. May we not infer, suggests Mr. Hilton Brown, that he was "fundamentally uninterested in political questions"? Yet "he felt it incumbent on him to strike an attitude and in this, once assumed, he petrified. The result was that between his first-class intellect and his second-hand political opinions there was a constant and unresolved conflict which, if it was never obvious to himself, was always fatally obvious to his enemies." Faced with the question why he felt obliged to strike an attitude, instead of allowing himself to develop along those lines of direct observation and graphic description for which he was so admirably suited, his new biographer replies that the habit of proselytism was in Kipling's blood:

> We see a preacher—one might almost say, a prophet—by birth and inclination; the hard-headed, proselytising North Country Methodist, confused but inspired by the mystic and superstitious Celt. He has a mission to instruct . . . His early upbringing is stormy, at times penitential; it instils in him a need for privacy and independence and a distrust in man which may become under suitable stimuli . . . the germ of a distrust in God.

Here we return from the worth or worthlessness of Kipling's ideas to the peculiar characteristics of the mind by which they were received and fostered. Mr. Hilton Brown speaks of "petrification," but the word was unhappily chosen. If Kipling failed to become the great modern novelist, the "English Balzac" whom Henry James had foreseen and welcomed, if most of his stories are deformed, here and there, by inexplicable faults of taste and exasperating tricks of style—for instance, the sham Biblical idiom he always much affected—it was not because he had "wrong" ideas or had suffered disabling experiences during childhood and maturity—the ideas were a symptom: the experiences he underwent might well have been surmounted—but because his genius, in the last resort, was curiously immature. He had known India as a very young man: his famous Indian stories have the clarity of a young man's vision, accompanied by its drawbacks. He simplified his view of life with the help of a schoolboy's code. He retained a schoolboy's love of mystification—again and again he hints at secrets that cannot be divulged, knowledge he cannot communicate: "that" (he is fond of repeating) "is another story"—together with a schoolboy's passion for machinery, for the things that work, for a trim mechanical universe that does not admit the bewildering complexity of adult human feelings.

Thus the consummate artist—for no one who studies words, or, on his own account, has ever attempted to write a story, can deny that Kipling was an artist of superb accomplishment—failed to conquer the heights of self-expression that appeared to be his birthright. He paused at a certain distance, like Moses contemplating the blue perspectives of a far-off Promised Land—one of those incomplete men of genius, so numerous in the astonishing literature of the English-speaking races. Yet, as a creative intelligence at least, Kipling did not petrify. It is an odd fact—one that comes home to us with a shock of surprise when we are considering his progress—that the darker, more troubled side of his mind grew more and more pronounced as he travelled towards old age. Just as *The Brushwood Boy* has two facets, which mirror alternately the real and the dream world, a real world of duties and conventions, a dreamland of nameless fears and irresponsible imaginings, so Kipling's spirit had a light and a dark side, a harshly dogmatic and a dreamily pessimistic or romantically defeatist strain. *Debits and Credits*, published in 1926, and *Limits and Renewals*, published in 1932, contain stories that, had they been the work of a young and unknown writer, the average editor might have condemned as ridiculously obscure or dismissed as perversely morbid. Some, like *Dayspring Mishandled* and *Unprofessional*, show a Jamesian indirectness of approach and involution of a technique, unrelieved, however, by Henry James's unequalled powers of penetration; and a reader struggles through to the closing paragraph with only the very vaguest conception of the story's theme and purport. Even more striking is the regular reappearance of certain types of subject. *Dayspring Mishandled* unfolds a gloomy labyrinth of treachery, disease and death. *The Woman in His Life*, a sentimental dog-story, starts off with a vivid description of a harrowing nervous breakdown. *Unprofessional* is based on cancer and suicide. *The Wish House*, one of Kipling's most horrible fantasies, reverts to the subject of cancer, which, in this instance, is represented as a direct result of witchcraft. *A Madonna of the Trenches* is a study of suicide, in a setting of shell-shocked hysteria and ghostly visitation. *The Gardener*, which deserves to rank high in the Kipling canon, deals with a mysterious mourner and an unacknowledged love. That last effort is particularly effective and highly typical. It has the customary faults of taste—here the apparition of Christ as a gardener of war-graves; it also reveals Kipling's talents in the purely dramatic order. Helen meets Mrs. Scarsworth, who tells her that she has been commissioned to photograph graves, at a dismal Belgian inn:

> Mrs. Scarsworth had backed against the shut door, and her mouth worked dryly.
>
> . . . "You—you know about those graves of mine I was telling you about downstairs, just now? They really *are* commissions. At least, several of them are?" Her eyes wandered round the room. "What extraordinary wall-papers they have in Belgium, don't you think? . . . Yes, I swear they are commissions. But there's *one*, d'you see, and—and he was more to me than anything else in the world. Do you understand? . . . Of course, he oughtn't to have been. He ought to have been nothing to me. But he *was*. He *is*. That's why I do the commissions, you see. That's all."
>
> "But why do you tell me?" Helen asked desperately.
>
> "Because I'm *so* tired of lying . . . He was everything to me that he oughtn't to have been—the one real thing—the only thing that ever happened to me in all my life; and I've had to pretend he wasn't . . . I've gone to him eight times . . . To-morrow'll make the ninth, and—and I can't—I *can't* go to him again with nobody in the world knowing. I want to be honest with some one before I go. Do you understand? It doesn't matter about *me*. I was never truthful even as a girl . . ."
>
> She lifted her joined hands almost to the level of her mouth, and brought them down sharply, still joined, to full arms' length below her waist. Helen reached forward, caught them, bowed her he
> them, and murmured: "Oh, my dear! M
> Mrs. Scarsworth stepped back, her face
>
> "My God!" she said. "Is *that* h
> it."

No, Kipling's talents did not decay. They remained in suspense, just as the conflicts behind them remained permanently unresolved—or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, permanently unassimilated. The waking man and the dreamer—the prophet and the artist—were still at variance when he published his tantalising autobiography, that masterpiece of suppression and understatement, in 1937.

Peter Quennell

THE RELIGION OF HATE

The Jehovah's Witnesses. By Herbert Hewitt Stroup. *Columbia University Press.* 16s. 6d.

In 1914 Jehovah placed the Lord Jesus Christ on his throne and threw Satan out of heaven. In 1918 Christ entered God's temple and offered himself as King and rightful ruler of the earth. Very shortly Christ and his angels will fall upon Satan's organisations, i.e., all commercial, political and religious bodies, especially the last; and the survivors of Armageddon—beginning with the sizeable nucleus of the 144,000 faithful, or "special body" of Jehovah, mentioned in the Book of Revelation—will establish the reign of righteousness on earth. The longed-for slaughter of those outside the fold and the destruction of civilisation will have been achieved. Such is the hope, indeed the conviction, that dominates the hearts of several million American and English believers in the doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses, the new and growing religion of the dispossessed in the English-speaking countries.

The book-pedlars of this American religion, which was founded in 1870, turn up from time to time in all country districts in England. Bleak, boring, scathing and illiterate fanatics, they terrify housemaids, stir up family strife in the rural slum, discover the festering souls in outlying cottages and the neurotics of the working-class. (It is, or was, a delusion of the intelligentsia that there are no working-class neurotics: the workers themselves know better.) The pedlars batten on the hopeless, the dispossessed, the people who believe that "education is no good," that "nothing you do will ever improve society," that "political action" means just "playing into the hands of those who have the power." And so on. And they offer to the addicts of stagnation the daydream of divine vengeance, the conspiratorial assurances of "destiny," and the thrill of final rescue by miracle. But this is not the most interesting thing about the new religion of hatred, the new religion of the class war with its Chosen Class; the extraordinary thing is that in its organisation the Jehovah's Witnesses is a modern, authoritarian religion which has many characteristic echoes of the Fascist and Communist ideologies, their spirit and their organisation. The new "opium of the people" is distributed on militant, business-like, totalitarian lines. Toe the party line—as set out in *The Watch Tower* every week—obey the local leadership and you have put yourself on the right side of inevitable historical forces. "The Lord of the Harvest," says the official prophecy, making the most of both land and water, "is at the helm."

Mr. Herbert Hewitt Stroup, an American writer, has done a fascinating and valuable job of research into the history and activities of this extraordinary sect, a patient and a very fair piece of work. Unfortunately, he has been obliged to confine himself to America; the English branches of American religions develop variations. The English sectaries of these American faiths generally lack the bold, theatrical, don't-give-a-damn commercial zest, the faint poker-playing grin and frank materialism of the American puritans. We don't go to Bible-quoting battles with revolvers in our belts—which I remember seeing done years ago in Tennessee—and I doubt if any large gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses in England has ever been graced by a row of machine guns on the platform, as a defence against the armed priests of what all American Protestants call the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. (Perhaps they expected a shock brigade of the Knights of Columbus to break up the meeting.) The convention of Jehovah's Witnesses at Detroit is said to have had spotters on the roof, as the Witnesses thought they might be bombed by their enemies. The English are deficient in the instinct for publicity.

To the general reader the Jehovah's Witnesses are known chiefly because they were conscientious objectors during the war. In America they were violently persecuted for this reason. They are also known through the name of the late Judge Rutherford and his book *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. But Rutherford was not the founder. He was the lawyer of the organisation. Russell was the original prophet, a white-bearded spell-binder of the Seventies and Eighties who travelled the States with a band of courtiers in a private train. For a time, Russell preached a kind of stop-gap socialism which was to precede the Kingdom of Heaven—when the State would fade away, as in the Marxist promise. He caused a split in the movement by the scandal of his divorce. The divine afflatus of the movement, derived from the chaos of a literal reading of the Old Testament, comes from Russell. Rutherford was the publicist and organiser, a prolific writer, a canny publisher. Both men were personal dictators. They claimed the useful gift of divine inspiration, which always gives a cachet to contradictions of doctrine.

Socialism was soon dropped out of the programme of the Witnesses, who saw that, in a world growing more prosperous with every decade, promise of disaster would have more pull. A military organisation of cells, called Companies, with their captains, was built up; every Witness was put on the card index, his hours of duty were assigned to him. What was his duty? In practice, the sale of the official literature. Obedience to headquarters, implicit belief in the official writings, absolute acceptance of the organisation, went without saying. Virtue did not lie in acts, nor grace in the condition of the soul. Virtue lay in an almost Tibetan acceptance of the dogma. For example, if a Witness is sick, the cause is not thought to be physical; the malady of the sufferer is that he is at fault in his doctrinal position. (He may have criticised the leaders.) The chief enemy of the Witnesses is the other religions. The bleak meeting houses of the Companies, where no hymns are sung and no ceremonial takes place, are often decorated with the cheerful text: Religion is Doomed.

And there one has the immense attraction of the new religion. It exploits the longing for doom. It discovers more and more negations; more and more opportunities of saying, I told you so. Marriage is discouraged. Women are despised. Children are neglected. There is said to be sexual laxity; but sexual lassitude seems commoner. (The Trotsky of the movement, who was pursued with all the efficiency of a highly organised militant and commercial organisation, accused the leaders at headquarters of drunkenness and telling dirty stories.) There is a businesslike tendency to organise communal trading. The movement was pepped up by offers of a "Millenial Bean." And patent cures for appendicitis and cancer have been sold through the Companies. These communal blessings on the material side have helped to ease the weekly drudgery of selling the prolific literature of the movement from door to door—sales are enormous, for this is essentially a book religion, and a relentless, pushing sales manager plagues the wretched pedlars—and the boredom of solving conundrums like what date the end of the world will come on; whether Jehovah speaks in Hebrew to the angels; what part of the divine body one is—whether, say, one is the arms or some part of the feet. Preoccupied by such problems, the devotees of the new despair, the Caliban branch of the philosophy of non-attachment, give up smoking, drinking, marrying, reject all social responsibility and interests, read nothing but the Bible and the official literature, abandon all part in public life, and sit gloating on the coming fate of their persecutors and critics. The atomic bomb must be a godsend to these people who derive a new energy from the dull treadmill of a religion of hate.

V. S. Pritchett

TEACHING

About Education. By C. E. M. Joad. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.

Education To-day and To-morrow. Edited by R. W. Moore. *Michael Joseph.* 8s. 6d.

Education for Responsible Living. By Wallace B. Donham. *Harvard University Press and Humphrey Milford.* 16s. 6d.

"Botched jobs adjusted." The advertisement referred to faulty tattooing, but it might well have defined Dr. Joad's intention in writing his book. Convinced that the education provided in this country will not improve until laymen know conditions, and get angry about what they know, he has written an adult's guide to knowledge. He chastises all previous attempts of the kind, and excepts only three books from his generalisation that all books on education are "for the most part unreadable." Others could easily be added. But he is right in his general contention, and too often the reader, having heard great educational Argument, comes out by the same Door as in He went. Dr. Joad aspired to write a different book on education, and he has succeeded. If he is diffuse, mischievously leaving the hunt to run after any scent which promises intellectual adventure, and not always accurate in his facts, he is never a bore. His ideas skip like young lambs. There are few educational works whose pages the reader eagerly turns over to find out what is going to happen next. Dr. Joad has the art of being amusing about that which profoundly matters. Its supreme readability makes this book a really important contribution to education at this time.

But however much he beguiles with brilliantly apt and symbolic illustrations, however much he chloroforms criticism with well-placed metaphor, and employs the technique of dramatic surprise to catch one unaware, there are plenty of grounds for quarrel in this stimulating book. He sees teachers as overlooked in a philistine society, or "remembered only to be the better despised." Yet he claims that "they are good talkers . . . and can talk with ease and opportunity to every class in the community." If they are good mixers and easily gregarious, why do they not mix? The explanation suggested is that they are underpaid and have long holidays. Dr. Joad must have been singularly fortunate in his pedagogic contacts if he seriously pretends that this is a fundamental rather than a contributory cause for the average citizen's flying from the company of teachers as from a hornet's nest of buzzing bores. It is an over-simplification. Generally speaking he is temperate and fair about public boarding schools and praises their educational standards and that "blend" in achievement which he rightly applauds as their peculiar property. He is out of date when he talks of a housemaster's job giving him £1,000 a year, "apart from what you can make out of your house." The system of private profits is fast disappearing.

Dr. Joad's contention that until public opinion holds education in higher esteem, and changes the status of the teacher, there can be no improvement, gets frequent confirmation in *Education To-day and To-morrow*, a volume consisting of twelve lectures given before the Royal Society of Arts in the winter of 1943-44. They suffer on the printed page from the form in which they were given, and if they were to have been published at all revision might have omitted such phrases as: "I should like to submit to this meeting." Composed when, as Mr. Hamilton hideously expresses it, "events of first importance in the educational world were in an advanced stage of gestation," four writers have to add clumsy postscripta to their efforts, because the subsequent publication of the McNair and Fleming Reports and the Education Act itself had thrown new light on their subject. Mr.

P. R. Morris's sketch of "English Education as it is" is a masterpiece of lucid compression; Mr. R. W. Moore's "Visual Education" a constructive reminder (at a time when organisation commands all the hearing) that education is finally concerned with teaching the child in the class room; and Mr. Hugh Lyon treats the problem of boarding schools with signal honesty and realism. Miss Strudwick with a refreshing insubordination dramatically breaks off from her discussion of girls' secondary education to lash out at the Education Act. She seems to see the Ministry and the L.C.C. as so many "Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold A Sheep-hook." Many of the speeches (for that is what most of them remain) plough familiar ground, and some of their authors might profitably have remembered, before consenting to publication, a remark in one of Gilbert Cannan's novels. Asked why he did not publish anything, Jamie replied: "I have too much respect for the few books worth reading to add to the multitude of bad books which make them inaccessible."

Professor Donham says very little at inordinate length. He is easy to read, but his style is pedestrian, his contentions repetitive, and his humour non-existent. A Professor of Business Administration, he is concerned with what he calls sound general education, which will enable its possessors to handle "novel situations with good judgment." American and British standards of education are different. In America, he tells us, philosophy "as now taught is too high-brow," whereas Dr. Joad pays tribute to "Greats" at Oxford as being the one school which fits a man to earn a living in any one of half-a-dozen different ways. Much of this so-called general education is accomplished here in Sixth Forms, and the proportion of "men of quality" who go to the University is higher. The book presents certain difficulties for the average English reader, who will not readily understand what is meant by such terms as Commencement Day, the A.B., and Shaler's Geology 4. It may, however, serve as warning of pitfalls to university authorities contemplating the award of "General" degrees.

JOHN GARRETT

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NEW NOVELS

Final Score. By WARREN BECK. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 9*s.*

Mine Own Executioner. By NIGEL BALCHIN. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The English Teacher. By R. K. NARAYAN. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

At Mrs. Lippincote's. By ELIZABETH TAYLOR. *Peter Davies.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

It is not difficult to guess whom Mr. Beck had in mind in drawing the central character of *Final Score*. His story is about a footballer called Hutten, who achieves great fame at a Middle-Western University. This fails to satisfy him, and when he leaves college, unable to bear the thought of no longer making spectacular touch-downs, he starts a professional football team of his own. Later, he becomes the head of a commercial corporation producing football paraphernalia, every piece of which bears his signature. Publicists take him up, and he is much called upon to lecture to American youth on the virtues of manliness and toughness. This phase of his career is described by Parker, a journalist, in these words:—

> And he had the fresh flood of newspaper publicity endorsing him in this neo-heroic role of his. But unless I'm mistaken, he was growing more and more dissatisfied with it all. His delivery of those manly sentiments became increasingly strident until an unmistakable tone of irritability crept in. When he would pound his palm with his fist in favour of the hearty high-scoring life, it seemed to me that he was actually punishing himself, and wanting to punish others, for some obscure deficiency he couldn't quite name but still couldn't consent to endure.

Ultimately Hutten identifies himself with the "south side"—the poor quarter of the town from which he comes; he allows himself to be made a brutish megaphone for politicians, and Mr. Beck pursues his history to its violent end. It is a thrilling story, and one is gradually filled with an excited loathing for Hutten; but the book is more remarkable for the manner of its presentation than for its theme. Hutten, as Parker is made to say, represents that particular evil of our time which has found its expression in dictatorship. Many a novelist might count his task well done if he unfolded this gradually; but Mr. Beck makes his true theme clear at the outset. He wants to give the feeling of an evil remote, vague and intangible, and he gets this effect by setting Hutten, almost throughout, at a considerable distance from the reader. Most of the time he is presented in a series of conversations between the author and Parker, who perhaps may be taken to stand for that mixture of disgust and fascination which most of us feel about the Huttens of this world. Twice, the reader is allowed to move a little nearer Hutten, and the climax of the book (again at some distance, and from an upstairs window) is seen through the eyes of the author. But the reader is never alone with Hutten; and never shares his thoughts. The camera-angles of the book are chosen with great acuteness and the book is admirably concise. It is scarcely a disparagement to think of Henry James and Conrad as one reads it and as one notes the author's preoccupation with "point of view"; it is obviously the work of a very serious novelist with a respect for his calling and for his predecessors.

Mr. Balchin is a brilliant novelist and his gifts are boldly defined ones. He can deal with the utmost ability with a large number of characters; and while often writing comically he can give an atmosphere of near-tragedy to the general lines of his story. His last novel, *The Small Back Room*, was a disconcertingly vivid study of corruption, dishonesty and jockeying for position in a branch of the Temporary Civil Service. I have encountered no temporary civil servant who did not claim to recognise his immediate superiors and several of his colleagues in it, and none who did not feel that Mr. Balchin had aimed a blow, however ineffectual, on his behalf. *Mine Own Executioner* is about psycho-analysis, and is so astonishingly simple in plot and design, so full of good scenes which seem to have fallen to the author merely for the asking, that one wonders why the book has not been written before.

Its hero is a psycho-analyst named Milne, who spends his working hours in extricating others from their disasters, and the rest of his time in endeavouring to face the problem of his own failing love, a problem to which psycho-analysis provides no solution. The story of difficult domesticity is better done than in *The Small Back Room*, and Milne's wife is a beautifully and touchingly drawn character. Despite its theme the book is not bolstered up by text-books; nor does it suggest them. (In fact, Mr. Balchin's knowledge of the technical aspects of psycho-analysis is no greater than that of most of us; at one point the hero refers to the "sub-conscious mind," and at another the study called "analytical psychology" is connected with Vienna.) The brief fragments of analysis we overhear are

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4*s.*

unexpectedly successful in orchestrating Milne's life; and the scene where Milne's personal trouble first takes a hand in interfering with the problem of one of his patients is the work of a novelist and not of a clinician. So is the mounting tragedy which follows. As in *The Small Back Room*, the dialogue, of which the book largely consists, is excellent; and in the narrative passages, Mr. Balchin has dropped the curt slanginess which in the earlier novel may have been excused as the way the narrator thought, but which at the same time struck one as an evasion of difficulties.

The English Teacher is set in the same little town of Malgudi which provided the scene of Mr. Narayan's earlier novel, *The Bachelor of Arts*. Its hero and narrator is a lecturer named Krishnan, who earns a hundred rupees a month lecturing on *King Lear*, Beaumont and Fletcher, Milton and other North-Western exotics to young Indian students whom, for unclear reasons, they are supposed to interest. The story is about the collapse and recovery of happiness. Krishnan's wife dies half-way through the book; he muddles his way poignantly on, until he is enabled to establish, after long practice, a psychical contact with her spirit. The psychological change which this involves enables him simply and decisively to solve other problems as well, including that of his ridiculous and pathetic *milieu*. The book is amusing, gentle and comic; its texture is something not to be found elsewhere in contemporary fiction, and it is nice to believe that if the blurb had not pointed out Mr. Narayan's affinities with Chehov, one would have noticed them oneself.

At Mrs. Lippincote's is a promising first novel, without much of a story in it. It is about an R.A.F. officer called Roddy, and his wife, Julia, who come to live with their small son and a female cousin of Roddy's in an old-fashioned furnished house where Roddy can "live out." The house is vaguely haunted by its real owners, and one of them, the mad Miss Lippincote, flits occasionally in and out of the house. There are several things lacking in the book; the house is not a sufficient presence in the story and Roddy and Julia do not appear vividly enough, so that the revelation of Roddy's infidelity, which constitutes the climax, does not affect us with more than a mild surprise. On the other hand, the final pages of the book where Julia, much to Roddy's annoyance, dismisses his faithlessness as a trivial thing, are outstandingly well done. The subsidiary characters are well drawn, especially the little boy, Oliver, who falls in love—as who of us in his time has not?—with the pictures of little girls in books; and the book is, for the most part, sensitively and amusingly written.

HENRY REED

A FASTUOUS PRODUCTION

The Authentic Arabian Horse. By LADY WENTWORTH. *Allen and Unwin.* *5 guineas.*

How large, how sumptuous, how beautiful! Appropriate words for a monument, and that is what this book is—a monument to the memory of Lady Anne Blunt, many of whose notes on the Arabians and their horses are incorporated in it, and a plea for the continuation of her life-work, the intelligent preservation of the true Arabian stock.

Lady Wentworth is Byron's great-granddaughter and Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's daughter; one would have expected style as well as dash. But alas, the racy but ultimately inexpressive language, the arrogance, the garrulity, the school-girlish scorn of ignorance, the use of stud jargon, belong entirely to the closed small world into which the aristocratic tradition of sport in England has dwindled. Nothing could show the implications of this dwindling better than the illustrations. The abstract, exquisite eloquence of a Wootton or a Sartorius, or the dignified painterliness of many less well-known sporting pictures delight anyone who is commonly delighted by pictures. But in a Munnings this art has descended into bowery naturalism. Lady Anne Blunt had lessons as a child from Ruskin, and her water-colours of Arabia have something of his earnest passion: there is compressed in them something of that sense of flowering, dying, decaying and hardening, something of the Victorian preoccupation with the core rather than the worm beneath the skin. But Lady Wentworth's watercolours are thinly amateur. The photographs, though many of them are beautiful and some are funny, have on the whole a depressing slickness, quite pointless except as a part of salesmanship.

Having taken in the pictures, all but hippomaniacs could shut the book—if it were not for the noisy ghost of Wilfrid Blunt. Amongst the portraits of the family those of Blunt have embarrassingly admiring captions: underneath a talented juvenile self-portrait, "Too Beautiful to Live"; underneath him as a handsome young man, "The Universal Fascinator"; underneath him as an old man (a particularly good drawing with no indication anywhere as to who did it), a quotation from the *Love Sonnets of Proteus*:

I rise up upon Horeb and I cry
There is no other God but only I.

But it is even more embarrassing to discover that this admiration is clumsy irony—that the bitterness that Lady Anne Blunt concealed beneath her ladylike and gentle acceptance of ill-treatment has been treasured up and repaid with violence; Lady Byron, not Byron, is the demon of this family. Lady Wentworth says: "It is no province of this work to deal with tragedy, and we refer to it only to show how it happened that the interest in and love of Arabian horses came eventually to fill her life." And how clearly the short biographical section shows, in spite of its shrillness, the nature of this tragedy; the incapacity of this well-bred woman to hit back at the right moment and then forget. What Blunt could not forgive was Lady Anne's forbearing generosity. What she came in the end to resent most was not his repeated, ostentatious unfaithfulness but his habit of using her passion for Arabian horses as part of his stock-in-trade, as an extra, although important, flourish to his own personality. "An Arab cannot be too showy," Lady Wentworth says, and indeed nothing could be too showy for her father; he would satisfy his vanity by giving away some splendid mare from the Crabbet stud. He would embark on some madly dangerous desert journey, the dirty work of which, binding of wounds or mending of saddles, was left to Lady Anne:

> In the desert his power of commanding blind obedience from man and beast, his magnetic sense of direction, his self-confidence and instinct for finding water made him unique, but he was regardless of the welfare of anyone or anything under his command.

He would imitate the romantic but unlovable Eastern lawlessness, and there is a splendid story, told with snorting rage, of how he abducted from Crabbet Park by night the entire stud, then the property of his estranged daughter. Lady Anne's most caustic comment upon him is "a self-glorification which takes even my well-trained breath away": and one does not know which is the more exasperating, the well-trained breath or the hot, animal blast of the unconventional fascinator.

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30/-

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Test First Lesson

Lady Wentworth seems to have inherited nothing from her father except a certain insensitiveness. "As a poet, he excelled, for in poetry he found an opportunity to dramatise his loves and emotions," she says, showing as little understanding of what poetry is about as many of Blunt's comments on the poetry of his contemporaries do—this one, for instance, from a letter to Sidney Cockerel:

> On your recommendation I sent for *The Dynasts* and read it conscientiously through without finding anything at all in it which has any business to be called poetry except a little piece on the battle of Trafalgar imitated from Kipling.

But one sees how Lady Anne, driven to take refuge more and more in her own interests, personally through Blunt's infidelities, socially because she belonged essentially to the element in conservative diplomatic society that looked on Blunt, with his imaginative anti-Imperialism and his championing of underdogs, as an insufferable nuisance, became more and more absorbed by her studies of the Arabian Horse: that fiery, ravishing creature, beautiful but not faithless, aristocratic but not bullying, proud but not selfish, intrepid but not self-important.

It is always sad to have legends destroyed, and those who have been moved by Islamic tales of the horse, evoked from a handful of south wind, or the five sacred mares of the Prophet, will no doubt find Lady Anne's ruthlessness depressing. But that is her weakness. Scholarly, painstaking, convincing without sparkle, her notes and diaries fail, where those of an historical genius would not, to be glamorous. Here is a brave and competent personality, humourless but faintly sportive. These are not qualities to compete with Blunt, especially when they are allied to a generosity that kills for years and then silently resents its own long-drawn life.

Only a small part of the book is concerned with these things; the rest is an encyclopædic account of the Arabian horse, past and present, everything anyone could ever want to know about breeding, breaking, riding, feeding, buying or photographing the animal.

MYFANWY PIPER

Week-end Competitions

No. 820

Set by Raymond Mortimer

The usual prizes are offered for the best rhyming alphabets, in 26 lines, about the names of cities.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 817

Set by W. R.

The usual prizes are offered for the best letters applying for the post of teacher of Russian and of hockey in a girls' school.

Report by W. R.

By Arthur Marshall out of Plekhanov was the style that I expected to be most popular, but most of the entries were in broken English. Mrs. Blamires and David Yates Mason produced some Brazilian diamonds, I liked Dorothy Bowers—" winning my Red as Left Half-back"; M. E. Platon— "I enclose three testimonials from ex-members of Parliament"; David M. Morris—" if necessary, I could also undertake the instruction of your girl cadets in the use of heavy machine-guns and flame-throwers"; S.B.T.— "My knowledge of Russian authors is competent, and I agree with all they say." Half of J. R. Till was excellent; experience given as "*Russian.* At the Fabian Summer School in 1930 the late Aylmer Maude's son showed me how the great Tolstoy had taught him to make paper gliders. *Hockey.* Have had the distinction of being cursed by Joad in the improvised pitch on Hampstead Heath. Nearly tripped him." Other good entries came from Stanley J. Sharpless, S. A. Cooper, M. Boulton, Robert Upcott and L. E. J. I recommend a guinea and a half each to Hamilton Cummings, Little Billee, and Redling, a consolation prize of half a guinea to S. A. Cooper.

"I am advised by my dear friend, the Baroness Osokoff, that you are in need of a teacher of Russian and, she tells me, *hockey!!* Now, whilst I can claim proficiency in the *former*, I cannot, as a Christian gentlewoman, include the *latter* among my accomplishments. However, the dear Baroness encourages me to write because, as she says, and *quite rightly*, I was extremely good at *croquet* when I used to play with the Grand Duchesses. Therefore, the Baroness points out, as I evidently have an aptitude for *games*, I would have no difficulty in speedily assimilating the rudiments of *hockey* and transferring this knowledge to my *dear girls!*

My Russian I acquired at *St. Petersburg* when I was English Reader to the young princess, Mitzski. Need I say more? My references from the Russian aristocracy are *unimpeachable* and they, like myself, are at your disposal.

HAMILTON CUMMINGS

Dear Miss Martin,—Though we met yet but once, I have a desire to propose to you. I am Russian, white man, well-looking and politely educated. I think it would be happy union if you gave me an engagement, for I would like you as my head mistress. I wish to teach chief the Russian language, in place of the now thrown-away German, and so give all your pupils the means of showing love to an ally. I would do the same to them in English, which I speak almost like a natural.

I would also make sport with the young misses, and teach them some games. In special, I am an old stick in the game of Hocki, and could train them in bullying, dribbling and hot-shots.

I cannot serve for love only, but need not much gold.
Hoping the favour of your hand by return.
Respectfully, Ivan Amorousitch.

LITTLE BILLEE

Salute to the Headmistress of St. Angela's!

I apply to teach the Russian and the hockey for you. I was born a Russian, therefore I know the Russian. I read the Englit so I know the English. I was a Sergeant in the Red Army, so I know the discipline. I will teach the Russian to the English.

The hockey I knew not but I read of it. Now I know of it. I was in the Red Army, therefore I know to shoot. I saw the Fascist beasts, therefore I know the bully and the sticks. The rest is but practice.

Tamara Tamarowska, ex-Sergeant, Moscow.

REDLING

The Principal,
Toppynge Grange,
Needall Worksett.

2 Deanery Close,
Mincester.

Dear Madam,—In response to your advertisement I should like to offer my services as teacher of Russian and hockey, and enclose herewith a testimonial from the late Countess Ogorensky-Kurbatoff, to whose children I was governess from 1906 until 1911.

I acquired a good knowledge of Russian during my sojourn in that then happy country and should naturally impart this language without the *undesirable propaganda* too frequently indulged in at the present time.

Although nowadays I might occasionally have some slight difficulty in taking the fullest personal part in hockey-matches, I feel this is a "blessing in disguise" and would enable me to exercise greater vigilance in matters of deportment during a game which may at times lapse into *roughness*.

Trusting to receive a favourable reply.
I remain, Very truly yours, Cornelia Blimber.

S. A. COOPER

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Personal

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" as a Moth fretteth a Garment!" . . .
. . . Moths plagued the Israelites: they will not plague you if you use "Malsek," the approved insecticide, obtainable Chemists and Stores.

A MOONLIGHT stroll, my pipe a'glowing,
My debt to Tom Long ever growing.

DOUGLAS Glass is now photographing abroad. His new studio will be opening in the autumn. Watch this column.

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QUAKERISM. Information respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends free on application to the Friends Home Service Committee, Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

ATROCITIES! Read "A Vile Sport: Facts about Otter-hunting," by Bertram Lloyd, 1*s.* post free from Nat. Soc. for Abolition of Cruel Sports, 9 St. James' Rd., Harpenden, Herts. Abolish hunting for fun.

Lecture Courses and Specialised Training

LONDON Co-op. Soc., Ltd., Educ. Dept. "Vital Issues of the Peace—The Domestic Aspect." Series of Public Sunday afternoon forums will be held Oct. 21st, Nov. 4th, Dec. 2nd, at Holloway Hall, 129 Seven Sisters' Rd., N.7; L.C.S. Café, 54 Maryland St., Stratford, E.15; St. Matthew's Hall, Milson Rd., Hammersmith, W.6. Subjects: "Are Controls Necessary?" "Are there Jobs for All?" "Private Enterprise or Public Control?" Spkrs: Sir Stafford Cripps, M.P., G. D. H. Cole, Barbara Castle, M.P., John Edwards, M.P., Michael Young, Gordon Schaffer, Ian Mikardo, M.P. All meetings com. at 3 p.m. Adm. free. Tkts. for reserved seats free on applic. from L.C.S. Educ. Dept., 34 Tavistock Sq., W.C.1. (Eus. 6461.)

NORTHERN Counties Assoc. for the Blind. Training Course for Prospective Home Teachers. Annual Training Course organised by above Assoc. will be held, commencing about middle Feb., 1946, and occupying a period of 6 weeks. Approval of Assoc. must be obtained before admittance to Course and candids. must not be less than 21 on date of 1946 Exam., which they must undertake to sit. Subsistence grants and travelling expenses will be paid on behalf of approved candids. residing within Assoc.'s area. Dets. and applic. forms from Secretary, Northern Counties Assoc. for the Blind, 17 Blenheim Tce., Leeds, 2.

DR. C. A. Smith gives 24 weekly lectures in a Univ. Sessional Class at Silver St. Schools, Edmonton, N., com. Oct. 16th, 7.30 p.m. Subject: "The Development of the Modern State." London Co-op. Societies' Joint Education Committee.

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Lecture Courses—continued

UNIVERSITY College, London. Public lunch-hour lectures on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1.15 to 2 p.m. Anatomy Theatre (entrance Gower St.). Adm. without fee/ticket. Oct. 16th, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane: "The Methods and Aims of Mathematical Statistics," I; Oct. 18th, Sir Bernard Bourdillon: "Trusteeship to Partnership in the African Colonies"; Oct. 23rd, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane: "The Methods and Aims of Mathematical Statistics," II; Oct. 25th, Dr. Margaret Read: "Education in the African Colonies"; Oct. 30th, Dr. G. Schwarzenberger: "The Charter of the United Nations"; Nov. 1st, Mr. R. Marrs: "The Peoples of Ceylon"; Nov. 6th, Dr. G. M. Friters: "The Future of the Ruhr"; Nov. 8th, Prof. Vincent Harlow: "The British Commonwealth and World Affairs," I; Nov. 13th, Prof. E. H. Carr: "Democracy in World Affairs"; Nov. 15th, Prof. Vincent Harlow: "The British Commonwealth and World Affairs," II; Nov. 20th, Dr. E. J. Cohn: "Company Law Reform"; Nov. 22nd, Dr. T. Balogh: "The National Investment Board and the Bank of England"; Nov. 27th, Dr. W. J. Milch: "A New Approach to the Study of Comparative Literature," I; Nov. 29th, Dr. P. N. Rosenstein-Rodan: "What are the Prospects for a Higher Standard of Living?"; Dec. 4th and 6th, Dr. W. J. Milch: "A New Approach to the Study of Comparative Literature," II and III. Fuller partics. from Assistant Sec., Univ. College, Gower St., W.C.1. Stpd. addrd. env. reqd.

THE Psychology, Physiology, and Mechanics of Piano Technique. 24 Lecture-Demonstrations by James Ching, M.A., B.Mus., Oxon., Saturdays at 3.15, 14 Hanover St., London, W.1. Oct. 20th, "The Fundamental Act of Technique." Lectures also available in printed form. Partics. from Sec., James Ching Pianoforte School, 21 Wigmore St., London, W.1.

THE City and Guilds of London Art School, 124 Kennington Park Road, S.E.11. In addition to other activities, School now gives full training in Design for Architectural and Film Modellers. Prosp. on applic. to Registrar,